



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Receives Soviet Message on Baker Talks

LD2403180191 Algiers Voice of Palestine
in Arabic 1602 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The brother leader, president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], has received a message from the Soviet leadership concerning the results of the talks held recently in Moscow between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and the Soviet leadership. The message was delivered by the Soviet ambassador in Tunisia during his meeting last night with the brother president.

Israel Departs Fatah Activists From Gaza Strip

LD2403183291 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1602 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The enemy's defense forces in the Gaza Strip have decided to expel four senior Fatah movement activists from the Gaza Strip. They are: Jamal 'Abd-al-Rabbuh from Bayt Lahiyah, Jamal Yasin Hasan Abu-Habil, Muhin Ahmad Masalim, and Hashim 'Ali-Dahlan. The latter three are from the Jabalyah camp.

Foreign Forces Responsible for Kuwait 'Crimes'

NC2103181791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1700 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] An official PLO spokesman holds all the states of the American-Zionist aggression that have forces in Kuwait responsible for the crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinians in Kuwait.

In a statement issued in Tunis today, the spokesman called on world public opinion and the Arab nation's masses and leaders to assume their responsibilities and to take immediate action to stop these hideous tragedies. The spokesman also appealed to the UN Security Council permanent member states; the Arab, Islamic, and nonaligned states; and the Islamic and international organizations to assume their responsibilities to stop the tragedy.

The spokesman pointed out that the PLO has held contacts to stop these massacres and crimes and to put an end to this new tragedy that affects more than 150,000 Palestinians in Kuwait.

It is worth mentioning that there have been reports that hundreds of Palestinians in Kuwait have been killed and buried in mass graves after being tortured to death [words indistinct]. The PLO earlier threatened to retaliate if the savage massacres against the Palestinians living in Kuwait continue.

PLO Says 4,000 Palestinians Detained in Kuwait

LD2503114791 Algiers APS in English 1025 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Algiers, 25/3/91 (APS)—The PLO announced on Sunday in a communique delivered to APS that the ICRC's (International Committee of Red Cross) representative could visit for the first time on Saturday Palestinians detained in Kuwait. Quoting Palestinian sources close to the Kuwaiti Government, the PLO noted that 4,000 Palestinians are detained in Kuwait among whom [are] 13 killed persons and 200 reported lost adding that 200 prisoners undergo torture. The communique specified that the ICRC's representative refused to give previsions [as received] upon this visit.

PLO Claims Egypt Wants To Change Leadership

PM2203161291 Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic
9 Mar 91 p 1

[Muhammad 'Umar report: "PLO's Illusions!"]

[Text] The PLO leadership claims that Egypt is earnestly seeking an alternative leadership from inside the occupied territories with which the United States and Europe can deal. The Palestinian leadership has forgotten President Mubarak's repeated statements about the importance of 'Arafat's role in the peace process.

The Palestinian leadership is still earnestly trying to send its representatives to Egypt, which has refused to receive any of them, despite PLO Executive Committee member Jamal al-Surani's attempts—which have also been rejected—to build bridges of understanding and to normalize matters between Egypt and the Palestinian leadership.

Meanwhile, Arab sources have pointed out that Kuwait and Saudi Arabia will not deal with 'Arafat in any way, now that it has been irrefutably proven to them that he is Saddam's direct partner.

Algeria

Interior Minister Holds News Conference

LD2503094291 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic
0630 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The forthcoming election was the subject of a news conference held yesterday evening by Interior Minister Mohamed Salah Mohammadi at his ministry. It was attended by a number of journalists representing various sectors of the national media. This meeting was devoted to giving some initial information about the proposed amendment to the electoral law and the draft law defining the constituencies.

The interior minister made some remarks about the 12 June 1990 electoral proposal and the mistakes that accompanied it, and said that when an electoral consultancy takes place, mistakes of the previous electoral consultancy can be understood and evaluated. He pointed out that previous elections had revealed many matters, including the fact that security arrangements were not equal to the event. Therefore, there was some chaos and irregularities during the elections. Consequently, the Interior Ministry this time will give great importance to this process.

The interior minister added that the elections had shown that the Algerian people were not represented by the Islamic Salvation Front, which got 30 percent of the votes, followed by the ruling party, which received 24 percent, contrary to what was said on the eve of the municipal elections. He pointed out the mistakes that emerged after the 12 June elections regarding the municipalities administered by the Islamic Salvation Front; evidence of this, as the interior minister said, is the tendering of 250 resignations by the elected members of the Islamic Front.

Regarding the changes introduced to some electoral laws, the minister pointed out that there are two laws that are changed quickly and continuously—the electoral law and the law defining the constituencies; hence the introduction of the proposed law to amend the electoral law by a group of deputies of the National People's Assembly, to which the government added some amendments. This is now being studied by the parliamentary legislative committee in consultation with the political parties, some of which have supported this amendment, while it was opposed by some others, as with regarding the Islamic Salvation Front.

With regard to organizing the electoral lists which are at the disposal of the municipality, the interior minister said the new law proposes the establishment of a technical body belonging to an independent authority supervised by an independent judge to make up and supervise the lists. Regarding the law defining the constituencies, the interior minister reaffirmed that their number is about 550, and that the adoption of the unified nominal list requires increasing the number of constituencies in order to bring the voter closer to the candidate.

Regarding the date of the election, the interior minister reaffirmed that this had not been fixed and that the president of the Republic is the one who will fix the date, recalling that the head of state had announced during his visit to Hassi Messaoud that he would announce the date during the next few weeks. Accordingly, the legislative elections will be announced soon.

At a meeting with the national press yesterday regarding attempts by extremist elements to stop an artistic performance at the Harche Hall the interior minister said that the authorities are determined to meet violence with violence and that that was the first time when we hit with force. He declared that if there is a need to deploy anti-riot squads around cultural halls to protect them and guarantee their activities, as well as the security of the people who frequent these halls, I will not hesitate to give such orders. The minister was asked why no announcement was made regarding the arrest of elements who attacked the Harche Hall; he reaffirmed that there will be arrests and an announcement will be made.

The same incident was repeated at the Atlas Hall in the Bab Oued quarter in Algiers during a popular gala last night, when the audience was surprised by a group of people throwing stones and bottles; half of the audience were injured. Had it not been for the intervention of the security organs something worse would have taken place. The head of the Bab Oued Municipality arrived, accompanied by a number of members of the municipal council. They included the member in charge of culture, who regarded the gala incident as a provocation. But despite this, the gala continued. After that, the chairman of the People's Municipal Council of the city of Algiers arrived. He threatened that this gala would be the last; otherwise, there will be grave consequences.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Arrives for Meetings

To Discuss Arab Developments

NC2303171491 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1550 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Algiers, 23 Mar (PETRA)—Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri arrived in Algiers from Tripoli, Libya this afternoon on a two-day visit to Algeria on the second leg of his current tour of the Arab Maghreb Union member states. During his tour, the minister will exchange opinions with officials in these countries on the current Arab state of affairs and ways to bolster and revitalize Arab solidarity and joint Arab action in the next phase.

The foreign minister was welcomed at Algiers International Airport by Algerian Foreign Affairs Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali, the Jordanian charge d'affaires in Algiers, and a number of Algerian officials.

In a telephone interview with the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY conducted from Amman, Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri said that he would meet with His Excellency Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid tomorrow.

Sunday, and convey to him an oral message from His Majesty King Husayn on regional developments.

Al-Masri will meet with Algerian Foreign Affairs Minister Sod Ahmed Ghozali in Algiers later today. Talks between the two ministers will deal with Arab and international developments; ways to support, activate, and revive joint Arab action and Arab solidarity; and fraternal bilateral ties.

The foreign minister's visit which is taking place [words indistinct] prior to the Arab League's Cairo meetings due to be held on 30 March will also take him to Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania.

Objectives of Tour Discussed

NC2403145391 *Algerian Domestic Service in Arabic*
1700 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri has concluded his visit to the Libyan Jamahiriyyah and arrived in Algiers on the second leg of his Arab tour, where he began talks with Algerian officials.

The foreign minister spoke to our news desk on the objectives of this tour and the developments in the Arab arena. He emphasized the importance of consultation and coordination among Arab countries to meet the requirements of the next phase. Let us listen to the details of the telephone interview with the foreign minister, which was conducted by Suhayl Khuri:

[Begin recording] [Khuri] Your Excellency the Minister, would you please tell us the most important topics you discussed with your colleagues, the foreign ministers of the fraternal countries you have visited?

[Al-Masri] We discussed several topics. First, the objective of my tour is to exchange views and coordinate positions, especially in relation to the Palestine question and developments in the Arab arena concerning this issue. We have heard about many views and plans being floated by the press and some foreign officials on the Palestine question. Therefore, we should have a prior stance in coordination with Arab countries on this issue. The Jordanian position is well known, and it has not changed. However, it is useful for us to start preparations for the next phase. Moreover, there is another important topic—that is, joint Arab action—whose absence we in Jordan complain about. This joint Arab action must be revived after we have learned from the mistakes of the past, and in a manner that promotes this action on a sound, viable basis. In addition, the domestic situation in Iraq worries us. We are consulting on this issue and exchanging information, since we all agree that the integrity of Iraqi territories is something basic and important—not only for Iraq, but also for the region and the Arab nation.

[Khuri] Your Excellency, what is your impression about the outcome of your visit to Libya, and what has the visit achieved on bilateral and Arab levels?

[Al-Masri] I found that the brothers in the Jamahiriyyah fully understand Jordan's position. We were in agreement on the topics we took up in our discussions, and on how to prepare for the next phase. This I sensed in my meetings with all officials. Also, it seems that bilateral relations will start a new chapter toward development and openness, not only on the political level, but on the economic level as well.

[Khuri] Your Excellency, where are the next stops on your tour?

[Al-Masri] I am now in Algeria. I will be leaving for Tunisia, Morocco, and then for Mauritania.

[Khuri] Thank you, Your Excellency. We wish you good luck. [end recording]

Received by Bendjedid

ED2403183791 *Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic*
1730 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Chadli Bendjedid, the president of the Republic, today received at the Presidency Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri. Following the meeting, Tahir al-Masri made a statement to the press in which he said:

[Begin al-Masri recording] First, I conveyed greetings from his majesty the king to his excellency the president and his majesty's best wishes on the occasion of Ramadan and 'Id al-Fitr. We talked about the current situation in the Arab world and the Gulf area as well as Iraq. Praise be to God, our views were in agreement regarding everything that was discussed. It is inevitable that Arab efforts in general should be united and that we are striving to deal with the Palestinian question and its solution according to the foundations that existed before the Gulf war and with the participation of the PLO. These were the main issues which we talked about, [words indistinct] because the situation in the region and what is taking place outside the region and what is being proposed from outside the region will affect all and it is inevitable that we should be prepared for it as one man, not as a Jordanian-Algerian but an Arab in general. [end recording]

The Jordanian foreign minister left today for Tunis, the third stage of his Maghreb tour.

Socialist Forces Congress 'Marred by Disagreement'

ED1503214891 *Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic*
1800 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] The Socialist Forces Front [FFS] Congress today entered its 3d and last day. It is about to end in an atmosphere marred by disagreements over the election of the new leadership. Our correspondent Mohcin Slimani sent this dispatch:

The general atmosphere inside the hall changed somewhat on the 3d day of proceedings of the constituent FFS

Congress. The proceedings, which are drawing to an end, will probably continue until well into the night.

The reason behind this change inside the hall is due to the emergence of contradictions and disagreements among the activists with regard to the nomination and election to the new leadership. These disagreements are very sharp, to the extent that there have been wrangles and quarrels between members of some provinces, particularly the province of Algiers. Indeed, we learned in a discussion held behind the scenes that there is a list which had been prepared in advance by a group of party members who are calling on the activists to vote for some and not for others.

Some youths denounced this operation and strongly criticized the executive officials for their actions, saying they did this for purely selfish electoral purposes. One youth said that since the congress is preparing for the legislative elections, the plan devised by these members, who are actively campaigning for their own selection, is aimed at obtaining seats for themselves in the new parliament.

There are still disagreements over whether the congress should opt for an open list or for a proportional list. The electoral moves inside the hall prompted one of the participants to make a passionate intervention to say that democracy is not respected and that some activists are attending the congress as if on a vacation excursion.

Regarding the election of the new leadership, it seems clear that Hocine Ait Ahmed will head the party, and the congress will elect a national council, which will probably be made up of about 100 members. This council will then elect a central committee. The question that remains unanswered is will youth, especially the students, have a place within the elected national council, since the youths have criticized the way the congress was prepared?

Most interventions focused on the question of cultural identity and democracy, and on the need to adhere to the concept the FFS has adopted as a basis for its political foundations, namely democratic socialism.

So far, the only committees to have submitted their reports are the health, national defense, foreign policy, immigration, and conditions for women committees.

Libya

Ethiopia Expels Two Diplomats for Security Reasons

Threat to National Security Cited

LD2303193291 Tripoli JANA in English 1741 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Addis Ababa, al-Rabia 23 [23 Mar], JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Ethiopia yesterday

announced that it will expel two Libyan diplomats and two Sudanese diplomats who it considered a threat to national security.

An Ethiopian Foreign Ministry statement said that the four whose names did not disclose were given four days to leave the country for their involvement in activities incompatible with their diplomatic status.

On the other hand political analysts in Addis Ababa pointed out that Libya was suspected of arming the (?rebels who) are fighting the government in the north. Also Sudan is accused of supporting the rebels who are said to be at 160 kms from the capital following the attack they led last month.

Tripoli Expresses 'Astonishment'

LD2303220891 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpts] JANA has learned that the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has asserted that while it expresses its astonishment and ignorance of the reasons behind the Ethiopian authorities' measures to deport two Libyan diplomats yesterday, it has initiated a rigorous investigation to get to the heart of the matter. It has also begun carrying out contacts in this respect. [passage omitted]

On the other hand, political analysts in Addis Ababa have asserted that Libya is suspected to be behind the arming of rebels who have been fighting the government in the North. Ethiopia also accuses Sudan of helping the rebels, who are thought to be 160 km from the capital following this month's attack.

'Shameless' U.S. Gulf Resolution Rejected

LD2303220791 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpts] AFP today reported the text of the U.S. draft resolution on the Gulf crisis [passage omitted] JANA's international affairs editor has commented on the U.S. draft resolution. He described it as a draft resolution for an unprecedented humiliation and shameless interference in international relations. The political editor asserted furthermore that Iraq should, given this extremely humiliating draft resolution, disappear from the face of the Earth rather than accept such humiliation. The editor went on, saying: If such a draft resolution is passed by the UN Security Council, it will constitute a precedence which would make big powers' interference in small countries' affairs a legitimate matter, which would allow big powers to fulfill their desire to extend their hegemony over any part of the world, a matter which would lead to the violation of small countries' sovereignty, independence, and choices.

Bahrain

Cabinet Welcomes Saudi-Iranian Ties Resumption

NC2403154291 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1220 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 24 Mar (WAKH)—The Bahraini cabinet has welcomed the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran.

At a cabinet meeting in Manama today, Bahraini Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Ibn-Salman Al Khalifah said this development is a positive step toward consolidating efforts aimed at enhancing security and stability in the region and advancing cooperation among the various Gulf states for the good and progress of their peoples.

The Bahraini prime minister praised the heroic role performed by the Bahraini Defense Force soldiers in response to the call of duty, and praised the high standard of performance with which they accomplished their noble mission in Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Foreign Firms Blacklisted for Israel Dealings

NC2503081891 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0625 GMT
25 Mar 91

[All company names as received]

[Text] Manama, 25 Mar (WAKH)—The Israel Boycott Office (IBO) recently approved several decisions related to boycotting a number of foreign companies in addition to those already blacklisted. These decisions were based on recommendations by the 63d conference of the IBO liaison officers.

The IBO lists show that a boycott was imposed on two Spanish companies, C.A. Commercial Ombul, which deals with chemical and pharmaceutical products; and C.A. Similas Vito, which trades in seeds, grains, and agriculture. Lists also show that the German ship "Olia" [name as received] has been blacklisted and prevented from anchoring at Bahrain's port because it violated the boycott principles and regulations under a previous name.

The boycott office also banned the import of textile and weaving machines, cotton and wool yarn, and sterile cotton from the Greek company Reni Abravanil, because it was proved that these commodities are imported from Israel.

The lists also indicated that air conditioning devices from the Greek company C.A. Midair have been banned. The ban also covers the mother company as well. Artificial silk and ready-made garments from the Greek company Mediterranean Trading were also banned, because these commodities are imported from Israel.

Kuwait

Cabinet To Include Women, Be 'National Coalition'

NC2203225591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2217 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—Tomorrow's edition of the newspaper AKHBAR AL-YAWM says that the new Kuwaiti cabinet, which Heir Apparent Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah has been charged with forming, will include women for the first time in Kuwait's history.

The newspaper adds that the new Kuwaiti cabinet, to be announced on Tuesday [26 March], will include the various major political currents in a national coalition designed to meet post-liberation challenges.

Informed sources said that the new ministers will be chosen from among all Kuwaitis with leadership abilities, regardless of whether they left Kuwait or stayed there during the Iraqi invasion.

UN Envoy on Compensation, Foreigners' Treatment

LD2203231191 London KUNA in Arabic 2100 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Muhammad Abu-al-Hasan, the Kuwaiti permanent delegate to the United Nations, has said that Kuwait considers payment of compensation to it by Iraq as a main condition for an official cease-fire. At a news conference in New York last night, he stated that this stance would not change even if the present regime in Iraq, led by the tyrant of Iraq, were to disappear. The United States yesterday distributed a draft resolution containing an article stipulating that Iraq must shoulder the responsibility for the damages caused by its occupation of Kuwait, which lasted seven months.

Abu-al-Hasan also said that the compensation would be paid from a fund financed through Iraqi assets abroad, in addition to a percentage of future Iraqi oil revenues, to be defined later.

With regard to returning stolen property to Kuwait, he said that despite the agreement on the ("mechanism") of records which will be carried out through the office of the UN secretary general, Iraq has not yet given a definite answer about the volume of stolen property. He also said that the Iraqis proposed to return quantities of gold without giving a definite figure. He pointed out that 1.25 million ounces of gold were stolen.

Abu-al-Hasan dealt with future assurances from Kuwaiti society in reply to rumors that Kuwait is planning to reduce the number of inhabitants from 1.8 million persons to half that figure. He denied [word indistinct] of these rumors but he added that Kuwait has a policy for the restoration of balance between the Kuwaitis, who were a minority, and nationals from other states. He also said that, after what has

happened, it is strategically important for balance to be restored between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

"Therefore, a policy to reduce the number of Kuwait's inhabitants will be followed; only foreigners will be disadvantageously affected by it," Abu-al-Hasan added. He pointed out, however: "No particular nationals will be the target of our policy; we will fully respect everyone living in Kuwait." He denied the PLO's accusation that the human rights of the Palestinian community in Kuwait are being violated, describing this as propaganda. The PLO supported Iraq's treacherous occupation of Kuwait, he stated.

The Kuwaiti delegate pointed out that the Palestinians themselves were the first victims of the Iraqi aggression; we will not make them its victim for the second time, he added. He warned, however, that Kuwait will not forgive those who collaborated with the Iraqi forces of occupation. He added that some of the destruction and killing took place because the Iraqis had received early assistance from nationals of particular countries. Once those responsible are apprehended, they will be put on trial, he stated. He pointed out that Kuwait is doing its utmost to protect the rights of Palestinians; the Kuwaiti Government has called upon the International Committee of the Red Cross and Amnesty International, as well as other human rights organizations, to inspect the records. We have provided them with every possible assistance, he added.

With regard to the border dispute between Iraq and Kuwait, Abu-al-Hasan said: The framework for any negotiation will be the agreement of 1963 on the 220-mile border. He added: Some progress had been achieved in previous negotiations; it is now for Kuwait and Iraq to sit down with the United Nations to reach an agreement on demarcating the borders. He added, however, that there is no political will on the Iraqi side to do so; as soon as there is, the dispute can be resolved in two or three weeks, he added.

ICRC To Visit Prisoners in Kuwait City

LD2503102491 Bern International Service in English
1000 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The All-Swiss International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] has begun visiting prisoners in Kuwait following reports of human rights abuses by Kuwaiti security forces. The ICRC in Geneva issued a statement saying its delegates began the visits at the military prison in Kuwait City after agreement was reached with the Kuwaiti Government. The statement said that in line with standard ICRC procedures, prisoners would be interviewed without witnesses. It said the ICRC would hand over a confidential report to the Kuwaiti authorities specifying possible improvements on the treatment and conditions for the prisoners.

Oil Minister: Fires Spreading to Populated Areas

NC2203194991 Paris AFP in English 1942 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Kuwait City, March 22 (AFP)—Oil from wells blown up by Iraqi forces that failed to catch fire is creating vast lakes of flammable crude which are spreading towards populated areas, Kuwaiti Oil Minister Rashid al-Amiri said here Friday.

Several wells were also releasing large amounts of poisonous hydrogen dioxide gas into the atmosphere and U.S. and British military experts have set fire to the wells which will burn until the flow can be stemmed, he said.

"Every day I can see the magnitude of the problem growing bigger and bigger," Mr. al-Amiri said, adding that Kuwait was appealing for international help in bringing the disaster under control.

Information Minister Interviewed on Situation

NC22031962491 Damascus Syrian Arab Television
Network in Arabic 1855 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Interview with Kuwaiti Information Minister Dr. Badr Jasim al-Ya'qub in Kuwait by an unidentified reporter—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Fraternal Kuwaiti Information Minister Dr. Badr Jasim al-Ya'qub, Syrian Arab television welcomes you.

[Al-Ya'qub] You are welcome in the State of Kuwait, your country.

[Reporter] May God bless you. Your Excellency the minister, I would like to take a look at the political scene following the end of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

[Al-Ya'qub] As you know, Iraq's sinful invasion of the State of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 has had many negative repercussions not only in the Kuwaiti arena, but also in the Gulf, Arab, and even international arenas. [passage omitted]

Some people are calling for the immediate implementation of the Constitution or for immediate elections. I believe this is impossible, because we cannot do these things under the current circumstances. There is a large number of Kuwaiti prisoners, refugees, and martyrs. Moreover, the country is destroyed. Therefore, three-month's martial law was declared in the hope that after this period has elapsed, Kuwait will restore its natural role and normal life. As his highness the heir apparent announced, if these three months are not enough, martial law will be extended until security prevails. Once security prevails and the situation becomes normal, political life will certainly be reviewed and correctly adjusted to Kuwait's reality and the 1962 Constitution. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] I believe some countries in the Gulf region want to play a role in regional security. How do you view the role of these states, especially Iran?

[Al-Ya'qub] The recent Gulf Cooperation Council summit conference discussed cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. There should be such cooperation because Iran is a Gulf state and because it adopted good positions toward the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. It also demonstrated positions based on Islamic considerations. I believe there should be full cooperation in these matters. I also believe there are certain signs that the region's states should guarantee their security. I do not mean only military security, but also political and economic security.

[Reporter] A comprehensive security?

[Al-Ya'qub] Yes, a comprehensive security. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] How do you view future relations [between Kuwait and Syria]?

[Al-Ya'qub] I believe these relations speak for themselves because no Kuwaiti, whether he is an official or ordinary citizen, will forget Syria's role in liberating Kuwait as well as its firm position on the need to do so. I am not surprised by the positions of Syria and President Hafiz al-Asad in particular, who adopted firm historic positions. Time has proved the credibility of these positions. [passage omitted]

Austrian Ambassador Returns to Kuwait City

AD2203174391 Vienna Domestic Service in German
1700 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The Austrian flag is again waving in Kuwait City. Six months after he had to leave the occupied country, Ambassador Johann Demel again returned to his residence, which is partly devastated and ransacked. Normal operations are to start in April.

Saudi Arabia

Further on Iraqi Human Rights Group Appeal

LD2103130591 Riyadh SPA in English 1214 GMT
21 Mar 91

[Text] Riyadh, March 21, SPA—Custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, has received a cable from the human rights organization in Iraq saying many innocent people, including children, women and elders, were killed as the result of random bombing being made by forces of the Iraqi regime against a number of revolting cities in Iraq.

Dr. Sahib al-Hakim of the organization told the Saudi monarch in the cable that forces of the regime are still pounding civilian people with heavy artillery and helicopters gun-ship and tens of thousands are being killed as a result.

He urged King Fahd for immediate intervention to prevent the massacre and support the miserable people of Iraq.

Al-Hakim also called on the international community to do something and save the Iraqi civilians from the Iraqi dictator.

Iraqi Authorities Release 1,152 Kuwaiti Prisoners

LD2403213791 Riyadh Saudi Arabia Television
Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Today 1,152 Kuwaiti prisoners released by the Iraqi authorities left the town of 'Ar'ar on their way back to their country. The prisoners were transported from 'Ar'ar airport by Kuwaiti civilian aircraft. [passage omitted]

'Responsible Source' Issues Plane Crash Statement

LD2103174491 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1645 GMT
21 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 21 Mar (SPA)—A responsible source at the Ministry of Defense and Aviation made the following statement to SPA:

At 0520 this morning, Thursday, 5 Ramadan 1411 AH, corresponding to 21 March 1991, a C-130 plane of the Royal Saudi Arabian Air Force was on a flight from Jiddah to Ra's Mish'ab in the eastern region with 35 passengers of the fraternal Senegalese forces which are in the county as part of the allied forces. While returning to their position after performing the minor pilgrimage and visit to the town of Medina, the plane hit the ground while trying to land in bad weather conditions and lack of visibility caused by the smoke clouds formed by the burning oil wells in southern Kuwait that have been set ablaze by the ruler of Iraq.

The painful incident resulted in the death of the planes' passengers, including the six crew members, with the exception of five members of the Senegalese forces who are in critical condition. [passage omitted]

'Responsible Source' Condemns Israeli Settlements

LD2403230491 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic
2230 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has expressed its strong indignation regarding the Israeli authorities' attempts to continue building settlement housing units in the occupied Palestinian territories. In a statement to SPA tonight, a responsible source said that this Israeli move does not serve the serious efforts aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian question, and does not realize the objectives that are being sought: to arrive at a comprehensive and just peace in the region in accordance with the UN resolutions. The source called for a halt to the Israeli settlement operations in the occupied Arab territories and for efforts to be made to give the Palestinian people their inalienable legitimate rights.

Fahd, Mubarak Discuss Arab, Islamic Causes

*LD2303214391 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television
Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Text] The custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, had a telephone contact today, Saturday, with his brother His Excellency

President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt. During the contact there was a review of the latest international and Arab events, and the situation in the Arab region in the wake of the liberation of fraternal Kuwait. They also discussed ways of serving the causes of the Arab and Islamic nations.

Saddam Decrees Cabinet Changes 23 Mar

Ministers Relieved of Posts

*NC2303115991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1135 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Republican Decree No. 85 issued by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn in Baghdad on 23 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful:

In accordance with Paragraph D of Article 58 of the Constitution, we have decided the following:

First: Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi, deputy prime minister, are relieved of their posts.

Second: All ministers are also relieved of their posts. The ministers shall comply.

Issued in Baghdad on 7 Ramadan 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 23 March 1991

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the republic

New Ministers Named

*NC2303124691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1135 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Republican Decree No. 86 issued by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn in Baghdad on 23 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful: In accordance with Paragraph D of Article 58 of the Constitution, we decree the following:

1. Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi is appointed prime minister.
2. Tariq 'Aziz is appointed deputy prime minister.
3. Muhammad Hamdah al-Zubaydi is appointed deputy prime minister.
4. The following are appointed to the following ministerial posts:

'Ali Hasan al-Majid, interior minister;
Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir, foreign minister;
'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud 'Abdallah al-Sabbagh, minister of agriculture and irrigation;
Arshad Ahmad Muhammad al-Zibari, minister of state;
'Abdallah Fadil 'Abbas, minister of awqaf and religious affairs;
Samal Majid Faraj, minister of planning;
Staff General 'Abd-al-Jabbar Khalil Shanshal, minister of state for military affairs;
Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih, minister of trade;
Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of industry and military industrialization and acting oil minister;
Dr. 'Umid Midhat Mubarak, minister of labor and social affairs;
Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam Muhammad Sa'id, minister of health;

Muhammad Sa'id Kazim al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs;

Staff Lieutenant General Sa'di Tu'mah 'Abbas, minister of defense;

Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, minister of culture and information;

Shabib Lazim al-Maliki, minister of justice;

ikmat 'Abdallah al-Bazzaz, minister of education;

Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq Qasim al-Hashimi, minister of higher education and scientific research;

Egineeer Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad, minister of housing and reconstruction;

Majid 'Abd Ja'far, minister of finance;

'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Ma'ini, minister of transport and communications;

Usamah 'Abd-al-Razzaq Hammadi al-Hithi, minister of state for oil affairs.

The ministers shall implement this decree.

Issued in Baghdad on 7 Ramadan 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 23 March 1991

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the republic

Ramadan Appointed Vice President

*NC2203180791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1803 GMT
22 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Mar (INA)—A presidential decree was issued tonight appointing Revolution Command Council member Taha Yasin Ramdan as vice president.

SAIRI Leader Comments

*NC2403055791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 24 Mar 91*

[Text] On the 40th day since the death of Ayatollah Sayyid Yusuf Hakim, a memorial ceremony was held by the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq [SAIRI] and the family of the deceased at the Imam Reza Mosque in Qom.

The ceremony was attended by SAIRI members; the Kuwaiti religious leader; Iraqi, Kuwaiti, Lebanese, Indian, and Pakistani scholars, theologians, and clergymen who are living in the Qom Religious Seminary; and a large number of Iraqi and Kuwaiti refugees living in Qom. During the ceremony SAIRI head Hojjat ol-Eslam Hakim discussed the scientific standing of the deceased and his outstanding services to Islam.

Referring to the uprising of the Muslim Iraqi nation, he said: The Iraqi people want to achieve freedom and to establish an Islamic rule in that country. Pointing to the Iraqi regime's crimes, he stated that opposition forces in Sulaymaniyah, al-Najaf, Basrah, and other Iraqi cities have found horrific prisons and dungeons where a large number of women, men, and even children were imprisoned and tortured under the worst conditions.

The SAIRI leader stressed that the objective behind the popular uprising in Iraq is the end of Saddam's rule. He described the changes in the Iraqi Cabinet as the moving

of the regime's known pawns and a new trick to extinguish the tempestuous popular movement in the country. He added that the Iraqi people will not be fooled by such tricks any more and that the only solution is the fall of Saddam's regime.

Ministerial Posts Formed for 'National Interest'

NC2303155491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1537 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] INA has learned that the introduction of the posts of prime minister and deputy prime ministers to the hierarchy of the executive power was made for reasons of national interest and in harmony with the trends of public opinion shown in the discussions of the draft constitution among the people, their organizations, and their executive councils in June and July of last year, 1990.

Further Reportage on Ayatollah Al-Khu'i

Under House Arrest in Al-Najaf

LD2403124691 Tehran IRNA in English 1125 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 24, IRNA—The Iraqi regime has returned the Grand Ayatollah Abu-al-Qasim al-Khu'i to al-Najaf following the massive protests of Muslims to his arrest by Baghdad, a close relative of Ayatollah al-Khu'i told IRNA here today.

However, he said the ayatollah is under house arrest in al-Najaf and that the Iraqi regime is still keeping a group of his relatives, including women and small children as hostages in Baghdad.

The Iraqi regime shelled the holy city of al-Najaf with 100 helicopter gunships during the three days of Ayatollah al-Khu'i arrest in Baghdad, killing many people, he added.

On the alleged expression of support by Ayatollah al-Khu'i for the Baghdad regime, he said the Iraqi Government using the current circumstances was trying to distort his remarks in favour of suppressing the Muslim and oppressed rising people of the country.

Denies Making Statements Under Pressure

NC2303203991 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Hasan al-Kashif dispatch from Baghdad]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] His Eminence Imam Abu-al-Qasim al-Khu'i today received press correspondents at his home in the city of al-Najaf. He denied that he made any statements under pressure. He also denied that he was detained. He said: You see me here in my home, so how could I be detained?

He also said: I stayed in Baghdad for two days, during which I met with President Saddam Husayn. He added: It is all over now, and thank God that the sedition has been quelled.

Imam al-Khu'i, who is over 90 years of age and in a wheelchair, told reporters: I am not in very good health, and I even find it difficult to talk. [passage omitted]

Foundation Issues Statement

LD2203170191 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The charitable Imam al-Khu'i Foundation in London has issued a statement in which it comments on news agency and information media reports that Iraqi TV broadcast clips of a meeting between Imam Abu-al-Qasim al-Khu'i and Saddam Husayn. The statement said:

First, never in the history of the source of emulation has a religious authority visited a head of government in his official seat.

Second, what happened today: The presence of the imam at Saddam's seat clearly indicates that this was kidnapping and detaining the imam by the special Republican Guard.

The statement said that the private sources of the foundation has said that the tyrant's regime has practiced the harshest means of violence and oppression, using all kinds of deadly weapons, including napalm bombs and the internationally banned incendiary phosphoric bombs, against noble al-Najaf and Karbala'. The statement added: We, from a position of responsibility, urged the Islamic world and all peace-loving states to stand firmly against the arrogant regime that is trying to conceal its abominable defeat by acting as a lion against people armed only with faith and the creed. Therefore, the ulema and heads of religious institutions in London ask all Muslims, all free men and governments of the world, international organizations, the UN secretary general, and members of the United Nations Security Council to urgently take whatever measures are needed to stand against the massacre and to move quickly to save the life and dignity of Imam al-Khu'i and all the distinguished ulema.

Government Representatives Continue Regional Visits

Hammadi Meets Al-Qadisiyah Governor

NC2303221791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2135 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Qadisiyah, 23 Mar (INA)—Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi, member of the Revolution Command Council and prime minister, visited the Governorate of al-Qadisiyah today and met with al-Qadisiyah Governor Kazim Batin and administrative officers.

During the meeting, which was attended by comrade 'Abd-al-Hasan Zahi Fir'awn, member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command and secretary of the Party's Euphrates Branch, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi emphasized the need to step up the repair of the saboteurs' damage to services and health establishments in order to provide the best services to the citizenry. The sons of the al-Qadisiyah Governorate, who gathered outside governorate offices, renewed their pledge

to President Saddam Husayn to stand behind his leadership and work to the utmost to build great Iraq.

Hammadi Tours Al-Najaf

*NC2303192891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1905 GMT
23 Mar 91*

[Text] Al-Najaf, 200 km from Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi, Revolution Command Council [RCC] member and prime minister, has conveyed President Saddam Husayn's greetings to the sons of al-Najaf Governorate as well as his excellency's great pride in their sacrifices for the sake of great Iraq.

This came during the prime minister's meeting with al-Najaf Governor 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Duri, the secretary of the Ba'th Party branch in the governorate, and other officials.

At the meeting, which was also attended by 'Abd-al-Hasan Zahi Fir'awn, Ba'th Party Regional Command member and secretary of the Euphrates branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi, RCC member and prime minister, stressed the need for the heads of the central and services departments in the governorate to perform their normal duties to rebuild what was destroyed by the cliques of saboteurs who came from outside the country's borders.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi, accompanied by 'Abd-al-Hasan Zahi Fir'awn and the al-Najaf governor, also made a field tour of the governorate, during which he acquainted himself with the services being rendered to the citizens.

Ramadan Visits Al-Hillah

*NC2303161191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1515 GMT
23 Mar 91*

[Text] Al-Hillah, Southern Iraq, 23 Mar (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and vice president, paid a visit today to the city of al-Hillah. He toured the cities' streets and neighborhoods to observe the progress in services being rendered to the citizens.

The vice president held a meeting at governorate headquarters with the governor, the secretary and members of the party branch command, and the chairmen of the governorate's security departments. At the meeting, the need was stressed to provide services for citizens and reconstruct what was destroyed in the aggressive war and the riots in a manner that will help pass from the current stage into a new one of building and reconstruction.

The RCC member and vice president also paid a visit to the headquarters of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party branch in the governorate, where he met with the secretary and members of the party branch command. He discussed with officials the role that professional and popular organizations and unions can play in upgrading the reconstruction process in a manner that will guarantee the return of normalcy to all facets of work and life.

The masses expressed to the vice president their happiness at the return of normalcy and security to the governorate. They reaffirmed their determination to proceed with the march under the leadership of leader President Saddam Husayn.

Deputy Premier Visits Dhi Qar

*NC2403194991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1925 GMT
24 Mar 91*

[Text] Al-Nasiriyah, 24 Mar (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi has visited the district of Suq al-Shuyukh and the sub-district of Karmat Bani Sa'id in the Dhi Qar Governorate. The deputy prime minister conveyed President Saddam Husayn's greetings to the citizens of Suq al-Shuyukh and Karmat Bani Sa'id, who, for their part expressed their full readiness to make sacrifices for the homeland's unity and to support the historic leadership of the leader president.

During his meeting with the administration officials and party cadres, Muhammad Hamzah stressed the importance of providing the best services to the citizens in accordance with the instructions of President Saddam Husayn.

The deputy prime minister was accompanied by Hasan 'Ali, Ba'th Party regional command member; Dhi Qar Governor 'Aziz Salih al-Numan; and a number of the governorate's officials.

Minister Visits Al-Najaf, Babil

*NC2403140491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1300 GMT
24 Mar 91*

[Text] Al-Najaf, 24 Mar (INA)—Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud met today with al-Najaf Governor 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Duri and a number of governorate officials. Two ministry under secretaries were also present at the meeting. The conferees discussed the agriculture and agricultural services situation in the governorate. They also discussed the advanced stages of the agricultural campaign.

The minister also met with the staff of the governorate's agricultural department. The minister stressed the need for promoting the standard of services offered to the citizens in the agricultural field, for expanding agricultural areas, and for increasing agricultural products.

Minister Mahmud witnessed the popular campaign to clean the agricultural departments in the al-Najaf governorate which were recently subjected to acts of sabotage by the gangs of mobs.

The minister of agriculture then met with Babil Governor Tali' Khalil. The minister emphasized that the needs of peasants and farmers be immediately met for the agricultural campaign to produce the best positive results. He urged the governorate's agricultural department staff members to assume their national responsibility and render the best services to the peasants and to meet their fertilizer, seed, and agricultural material needs in order to develop the

field of agriculture in Babil. The meeting was attended by the secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'ih Party, Babil branch, the under secretaries of the ministry of agriculture, and a number of governorate officials.

Party Official Tours Area

NC2203185991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1730 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The masses of our people in (Khuj) Province of the Salah-al-Din Governorate have renewed their vow of loyalty and allegiance to the builder of the glory of Iraq and the Arab people President leader Saddam Husayn. Comrade Kamil Yasin Rashid, member of the regional command and secretary general of the central organizational office, learned this in the streets of (Khuj) Province, during a tour where he inspected the living conditions and the level of services provided to the population there.

Comrade Kamil Yasin Rashid, in a meeting with the heads of government departments and officials of the judiciary branch, said that the brutal imperialist-Zionist-NATO aggression aims foremost at shaking the self-confidence of the Iraqis and the Arabs and destroying the creative powers of our people, for this would allow the evil powers to implement their imperialist designs in the region.

The member of the regional command said that the steadfastness of our great people, their resolve to undermine all the imperialist designs, and their support for the historic leadership of President leader Saddam Husayn has foiled all the schemes.

The meeting was attended by the Salah-al-Din governor and the secretary and members of the Arab Socialist Ba'ih Party branch command. Comrade Rashid also noted the need for the speedy implementation of maintenance and repair of the service and industrial facilities that were subjected to the brutal and imperialist shelling, so that the public could be provided with the best public service as quickly as possible.

Saddam Appoints Son Ambassador to Cuba

LD2203182391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Saddam has appointed his second son Iraqi ambassador to Cuba. The Voice of Rebellious [Enqelabi] Iraq radio announced the news today and quoted political observers as saying that Saddam's action was taken as part of the policy of keeping his family away from the revolutionaries' revenge.

Military, Police Academy Cadets To Report

NC2203145391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1403 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] All the cadets of the National Security Academy, the military academies, and the police academies should immediately report to their academies to begin classes.

Interior Ministry Seeks Recruits

NC2203145191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1358 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The Interior Ministry, the watchful eye that safeguards the citizens' security and provides them with various services, announces that it needs police recruits for various departments within the Public Security directorates in Baghdad and all the other governorates in the country. It invites all the mature young sons of our great people to join our public security forces. [passage indistinct]

Leadership's Families Flee to African Countries

LD2403222191 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq
in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Informed sources report that upon joining the popular masses, Colonel 'Abd al-Karim al-Dulaymi, cousin of former Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim, who was one of the leaders of the Republican Guard's 10th armored brigade in the region of Qurnah, gave the leaders of the uprising detailed information about the tyrant Saddam Husayn's plans against the uprising. He gave them maps and documents on the secret positions of Saddam's security forces in al-Basrah and its environs. Al-Dulaymi also supplied the revolutionaries with the names of those who are collaborating with Saddam's intelligence service and military intelligence in the region.

Colonel al-Dulaymi revealed that the families of all members of the so-called Revolution Command Council and ministers, together with Saddam Husayn's household, members of his family, and even his second wife, have been moved to Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mauritania.

The same sources add that Colonel 'Abd al-Karim al-Dulaymi said that cases full of dollars and gold stolen from Kuwait accompanied the families of the Saddam regime's staff on their journey abroad. Colonel al-Dulaymi pointed out that 28 Republican Guard officers had been executed on the night of 9 March on charges of planning to assassinate Saddam.

RCC Member Says 'Immediate' Embargo Lift Needed

NC2303161791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1548 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Commenting on the decision of the UN sanctions committee to facilitate the entry of food supplies to Iraq, Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, member of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and vice president, has stated that urgent and immediate measures must be taken to lift any form of embargo on food and supply materials. Ma'ruf added that there should be no delay in measures to lift the embargo, because any delay would not befit the reputation and status of the international organizations.

This is in addition to the unjustified damage and harm which this causes to our people in Iraq.

Assembly Speaker Assails U.S. Draft Resolution

NC2403161691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1455 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has condemned the U.S. draft resolution presented to the Security Council to establish a permanent cease-fire. He described it as a draft resolution unprecedented in the history of the United Nations.

In a statement to the INA, the National Assembly speaker said that this unjust draft resolution, both in its contents and articles, aims at undermining Iraq's national will and is a continuation of the U.S. double standard policy when dealing with the international community.

Salih went on to say that the United States uses double standards when dealing with international problems and crises. The United States, he added, through this draft resolution has violated [tajawizat] all international laws and norms. The National Assembly speaker said that any form of acceptance by the Security Council of this draft resolution will harm Iraq and the entire international community.

He called on the international community to reject the U.S. draft resolution and to side firmly and boldly with the nations' will, out of respect of their free choices and to avoid siding with the unjust strong nations, foremost among which are the United States and world Zionism.

In another development, Sa'di Mahdi Salih said that both present and future stages require all Iraqis to forge ahead diligently to achieve development and progress after expanding the base of popular participation in executing the country's affairs. He added that any honorable action to bring about Iraq's development and any effort to reconstruct what was destroyed by the aggressive war against Iraq will be in harmony with the objectives of the great 17-30 revolution and its course followed in all domains.

Asked by INA about adequate plans to ensure the fair distribution of basic foodstuff to citizens, the National Assembly speaker said that serious work is proceeding at full scale to guarantee the distribution of these items. This will lift some of the burden borne by the citizens and enable them to pass through this stage, during which the people's property and the state's reserve of foodstuffs and commodities were either looted or set ablaze by misguided gangs that let themselves be seduced into playing havoc with the people's destinies and their property.

Salih: Country To Uphold Democracy 'Principles'

NC2303164391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1535 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has said that Iraq is intent on

building the foundation for a new phase under the principles of the Constitution and the law.

In a statement to INA, Salih said that the principles of democracy, freedom of the press, and multiparty system will be upheld in accordance with the speech made by President Saddam Husayn last Saturday and Iraq's new Constitution, which the National Assembly has finished debating. This will pave the way for all good patriots to take part in the country's political life, Speaker Salih said.

Salih added that the Iraqis will find in the various means of political activity and expression a free and constructive channel through which they may contribute every effort that may enhance the dignity, interests, security, and stability of their country.

The National Assembly speaker said this atmosphere will ensure that Iraq and its great people realize their aspirations for laying the foundations for a constructive, objective democracy and for the provision of responsible freedom to all Iraqis—something that will enhance their strength, might, and ability.

Sa'di Mahdi Salih denounced the conspiracies of the enemies and the criminal designs that are being implemented by misguided gangs that intend to harm the great Iraq and its peaceful people. Salih said that the great sacrifices made by the Iraqi people were the price for their freedom and their resolve to defend their homeland and its sacred soil against the most brutal aggression in modern history.

The National Assembly speaker said that the steadfast Iraqi strugglers, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, are capable of defeating all the schemes of the odious conspiracy that are aimed at harming Iraq and its national unity and at sowing sedition and divisions in the ranks of this great people. The Iraqi people, as leader President Saddam Husayn said, are capable—with their rich civilization, heritage, and tradition—of thwarting these designs. Likewise, the Iraqis are capable of rebuilding and making up for the country's material losses.

Reportage Describes Unrest, Clashes in Baghdad

'Coup d'Etat' Rumors Heard

LD2303215591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
2030 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The city of Baghdad continues to be surrounded by Iraqi Republican Guard forces, and people are prevented from entering or leaving the town. According to reports received Iraq's opposition forces announced this fact, and said: No precise information is available about inside Baghdad, and hit-and-run clashes between popular forces and Ba'athist agents continue.

New sources in Syria, on the other hand, spoke of a coup d'etat in Iraq. The reports refer to a declaration of severe military regulations in Baghdad, to a total siege of the city, and to the closure of all roads to it, and add: Clashes in Baghdad still continue. The report of a coup d'etat in Iraq,

which has also been announced by the Voice of Rebellious Iraq, has still not been confirmed by other sources.

Security Forces Said Responding

NC2203174691 *Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic*
1615 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] A spokesman for the Political Bureau of the Islamic al-Da'wah Party has confirmed that Baghdad is currently under an all-out siege by the security organs. Special detachments have also been deployed on all approaches to Baghdad amid overwhelming confusion and reports about a military coup.

In a statement today, the spokesman pointed out that entry to Baghdad has been banned except for the transport vehicles of the pro-regime's forces, which are assigned to protect the head of the Iraqi regime. He added that units of these forces have been placed on maximum alert on all roads and in all quarters of Baghdad. The units are committing acts of violence against the citizens.

In his statement, the spokesman went on to say that the siege was imposed after information about a military coup. But the identity of the sides and units that intend to carry out the coup has not been disclosed. This information dictated that all the military officials and army units be placed under surveillance. He added that intensive guard and an extraordinary state of alert prevail around the headquarters of the Iraqi regime's head. There are also heavy movements by military vehicles in the areas where a state of intensive protection has been imposed.

The spokesman said that the dispatch of units from the uprising forces to Baghdad to settle the battle in the capital increased the fears of the Iraqi regime.

A member of the general secretariat of the Iraqi opposition and representative of the the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] said today that due to the developments in the popular uprising in northern, southern, and central Iraq and in order to establish coordination and integration among the opposition factions, it has been decided that representatives of the Joint Action Committee in the north and south exchange visits for coordination purposes. He added that a delegation from the northern region will leave today and that the southern region's delegation will leave tomorrow. He added that after the liberation of Karkuk by the rebellious popular forces and the liberation of Laylan, southeast of Karkuk, the following places have been liberated: the compounds of Panjah 'Ali and Tarhil in addition to the Kalkan village, south of Dibs on the Karkuk-Tikrit road, and five strategic positions overlooking Dibs.

The SAIRI representative said that the rebellious popular forces have managed to destroy the 118th Brigade and to seize a number of helicopters and a large number of weapons and military hardware. He added that hundreds of soldiers and officers have joined the revolutionaries.

Meanwhile, a SAIRI official has affirmed that as part of the genocide being committed by the criminal head of

the Iraqi regime to avenge the continuing Iraqi people's uprising, the forces of the criminal regime bestially massacred thousands of children, women, and elderly in Tuz Khurmatu. He added that the forces of the criminal regime committed this bestial massacre in retaliation for the part this heroic town played in the Iraqi people's uprising, and well over 6,000 residents, most of whom are women, children, and elderly have been forced to flee.

Tehran Radio Reports Curfew

NC2203203191 *Paris AFP in English* 1528 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 22 (AFP)—Iraqi authorities have imposed a curfew in Baghdad following demonstrations in that city. Tehran Radio reported Friday.

Tehran Radio gave no other details about the curfew, while Iranian news media in general continued to report heavy fighting in northern and southern Iraq between rebel forces and government troops.

The official Iranian news agency, IRNA, said Friday that the Iraqi government of Saddam Husayn had lost control in the north of the country, where the Kurds are revolting against the government.

Cairo Cites Opposition

NC2303222591 *Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic*
2100 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Iraqi opposition sources today said that the opposition forces have tightened the noose around the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, amid reports of clashes in and around Baghdad between the opposition forces and those loyal to President Saddam Husayn. The clashes left hundreds of dead, particularly among civilians.

The opposition sources added that the Iraqi ruling regime sent military reinforcements to the northern parts of Iraq in an attempt to quell the revolution and stop the advance of the opposition forces in the oil-rich cities of Karkuk and Mosul.

The opposition accused the army forces loyal to Saddam Husayn of using napalm and sulfuric acid against the areas held by the Iraqi opposition. Meanwhile, reports speak of continued fighting in southern Iraq between opposition and pro-Saddam forces, particularly in al-Basrah, al-Najaf, and Karbala'.

City Under 'All-Out' Siege

NC2303094491 *Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic*
0900 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The Islamic al-Da'wah Party in Damascus today asserted that Baghdad is under an all-out siege and that the situation in the city is precarious amid reports of a military coup.

The party added that Iraqi Army units have deployed in all Baghdad streets and neighborhoods and that these

units are on maximum alert. The party accused these forces of carrying out acts of violence against citizens.

'Voice of Free Iraq' Cited

NC2203235591 Paris AFP in English 0008 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Nicosia, March 23 (AFP)—An Iraqi opposition radio said late Friday a "state of siege" had been proclaimed in Baghdad after reports of a possible coup.

The Voice of Free Iraq, monitored here, said Republican Guards had barred access to the Iraqi capital after "the regime received reports of a possible coup."

U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher had said earlier Friday that many soldiers and other security services had been deployed in Baghdad to maintain calm, but that "sporadic clashes continue to occur in the city nevertheless."

Damascus radio early Saturday also spoke of reports of a coup in Baghdad, but did not give a source.

"The forces of opposition to the Iraqi regime announce that they are in control of new regions while reports circulate about a coup in Baghdad," the radio said.

IRNA Updates Reports of Fighting, Unrest

LD2503100591 Tehran IRNA in English 0818 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 25, IRNA—The holy shrine of Imam Husayn, the 3rd Shi'ite imam, in the Iraqi holy city of Karbala', came under the artillery fire of Saddam Husayn's army for the second time on Sunday, a spokesman for the Iraqi opposition announced in Damascus.

Following the attack, angry residents of Karbala' launched a heavy fight against Saddam's forces and succeeded in capturing parts of Karbala's suburbs, the spokesman added.

He said the revolutionary forces attacked a Republican Guard base in Khanaqin capturing 200 of them, including 8 officers.

Also, a spokesman for the Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said that on Sunday the Kurdish forces attacked a garrison protecting the South Korean Hyundai construction and engineering company in Kayvan region in the southern suburb of Karkuk, capturing the garrison and the company site without facing any major resistance. They managed to clear the area from the Ba'thist forces and transferred 12 Korean engineers and workers behind the battle scene.

Meanwhile, clashes between the popular forces and the Army in Baghdad still continue despite stationing of military troops in various regions of the capital. Iraqi refugees arriving in Iran told IRNA Sunday.

They said that the Iraqi Republican Guards attacking the anti-regime demonstrators in the Iraqi capital, killed or injured a number of them and deployed phosphorus and napalm bombs as well as poisonous gas grenades.

Other Iraqi refugees from al-'Amarah, al-Nasiriyah, al-Basrah and al-Tannumah arriving in Ahvaz, southern Iran, told IRNA that heavy clashes were underway between the popular forces and the Army in these cities and the cities are still under control of the people.

Moreover, the refugees arriving from al-Basrah and al-Tannumah said that al-Jamilah, al-Ashar and al-Najibiyah regions in al-Basrah and al-Basrah center are still controlled by the popular forces.

Mahdi Kadhemi, an Iraqi refugee, said that Saddam's forces have killed many civilians in al-Zubayr and Abu Khasib north of al-Basrah Governorate.

He added that members of Al-Sadoun tribe in Abu Khasib, who are pro-Saddam and receive financial support from the regime, have delayed the fall of the city into the hands of the people.

Other reports reaching IRNA correspondents in Ahvaz said that anti-Saddam demonstrations in al-Najaf, Karbala', Kufah, al-Sulaymaniyah, Karkuk, Irbil, al-Mawsil and al-Tikrit continue.

Other refugees arriving in Iran talk of the barbarous massacre of the people in al-Basrah. They said that the Republican Guards in al-Najaf, Karbala' and al-Basrah use children, women and elderly people as human shields and indiscriminately kill any male suspects between 15 to 40 years of age.

These refugees described as catastrophic the food, sanitary and medical conditions in all three cities. They added that in cities where popular uprisings are quelled by Saddam's forces, the bodies of those martyred are left in streets threatening the cities with spread of contagious diseases and even the people are not permitted to bury them.

In related news, the 'Voice of Rebellious Iraq' said in a broadcast on Sunday night that thousands of Iraqi Army personnel had joined the revolutionaries in the city of al-Amarah. The radio did not give any date for the events.

Rebels To Coordinate Action in North, South

NC2303201291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1650 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 23 Mar (SANA)—Jawad al-Maliki, spokesman for the Political Bureau of the Iraqi opposition Islamic al-Da'wah Party and member of the General Secretariat of the Iraqi Opposition Forces, has announced that representatives of the Joint Action Committee will be sent to northern and southern Iraq to coordinate the groups leading the popular uprising there.

In a statement distributed here today, al-Maliki added that a delegation of the Joint Action Committee left for

northern Iraq yesterday. He added that a similar delegation will leave for southern Iraq today.

For his part, engineer Bayan Jabr, member of the General Secretariat of the Joint Action Committee of the Iraqi Opposition Forces, affirmed that the Iraqi regime's troops have used all means of destructive vengeance in their offensive against the revolutionary city of al-Najaf, including napalm bombs, chemical weapons, and surface-to-surface missiles.

In a statement he made today, Jabr urged the Iraqi people to continue their jihad to attain freedom and independence. He indicated that the popular forces are controlling the cities of 'Ali al-Gharbi, 'Ali al-Sharqi, al-Kumayt, Badrah, al-'Amarah, al-Nasiriyah, al-Samawah, and al-Diwaniyah. He added that the uprising forces are exercising full control over northern Iraq.

A media spokesman for the Information Bureau of the Islamic al-Da'wah Party has made a statement affirming that the cities of al-Najaf and Karbala' remain liberated territory, and are under the full control of the popular forces despite attempts by the Iraqi regime's troops to advance on them.

The spokesman said that the popular forces have managed to break an offensive launched by the Iraqi regime's troops against the city of al-Nasiriyah, indicating that a curfew is still in force in Baghdad. He added that hundreds of dead and wounded are lying in the city of Tuz Khurmatu as a result of the shelling by the Iraqi regime's troops of the city, using internationally banned weapons.

Shiite, Kurdish Opposition Members on Objectives

AU2203215791 Vienna ORF Television Network
in German 2100 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Announcer] In Beirut more than 300 leaders of various Iraqi opposition groups met for a conference in mid-March. [passage omitted]

At a meeting of Shiite and Kurdish opposition members in Vienna, representatives who participated in the Beirut conference themselves reported on the decisions made there.

What are these decisions, which were made despite all contrasts?

[Begin Dhia Aldabbass, representative of the Iraqi Shiites, recording] All participants in this conference agreed on certain objectives: First, to support the rebels in Iraq. Second, all partners will respect the people's will. Third, they will form an interim government. We do not want a Shiite government in Iraq. [end recording]

In the opinion of the Kurdish representative, the most important tasks of a new government in Iraq are:

[Begin Said Pire recording] Democratization, a parliamentary system, the observation of human rights in Iraq, which is connected with the elimination of the regime in Baghdad. It is the task of the interim government to

eliminate the racist and totalitarian consequences of Saddam Husayn's policy of scorched earth, that is, to rebuild the villages, the Kurdish settlements, and to put an end to Arabizing. [end recording]

Southern Clashes, Battalion Defection Reported

LD2303114191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The people and the opposition forces of Iraq intensified their attacks against the Iraqi Republican Guards in al-Basrah last night. According to IRNA, the opposition attacked the Sheraton Hotel, the residence of high-ranking officers of the Iraqi Republican Guards and the Iraqi Security Service. Several officers were killed.

Fifteen commanders of the Iraqi Armed Forces that were organizing the massacre of the people of al-'Amarah were killed by the Muslim people of Iraq during the past few days. According to IRNA, an Iraqi refugee reported this yesterday, and added that the group of Iraqi officers killed by the people were dispatched to al-'Amarah following anti-Ba'thist demonstrations in that town. They were suppressing and massacring the people in al-'Amarah, al-'Nasiriyah, al-Basrah, al-Kut, Ali al-Gharbi, Ali al-Sharqi, and other Iraqi cities. He added that recently, one Iraqi battalion, complete with all their equipment and resources, joined the militant people of al-'Amarah. They fought Saddam's forces with the support of the people and Mujahid forces. According to this report, Iraqi refugees in Iran said the Iraqi Republican Guard forces, through the use of various means, including helicopter gunships, napalm bombs, and suffocating gas, continue to suppress the demonstrations of the Muslim residents of the southern cities of that country. Hundreds of innocent people in that country have already lost their lives.

Syrian Radio Reports Rebel Control of Karkuk

NC2303081291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0515 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] A statement issued by Ayatollah al-Mudarrisi's office said the liberated Governorate of al-'Amarah continues to be the scene of violent confrontations between the forces of the uprising and the Iraqi regime's forces. The statement says that 1,500 Iraqi soldiers have joined the popular forces. Two military bases and large numbers of weapons and equipment are now under popular forces' control in the suburbs of Karkuk.

Reports said regime forces—which are now confronting great resistance from the popular forces in the north, center, and south—are committing ugly crimes against the Iraqi people and are using napalm and incendiary phosphoric bombs.

Sources from northern Iraq mentioned that during mop-up operations yesterday, uprising forces in Karkuk took control of a large number of oil wells, the headquarters of the external body [maqarr al-hav'ah al-kharijiyah], and

the governorate headquarters. They also succeeded in taking control of the radio and television building, the airbase, and a large number of planes.

The sources said that the Iraqi regime's authorities are now trying to evacuate the border cities with Iran to turn them into purely military cities. These authorities are reportedly carrying out organized demolition operations, shelling mosques and religious centers with heavy artillery.

Action Cited in Zayn Al-Qaws, 'Ali Al-Sharqi

NC2403151991 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1440 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Excerpts] As part of the growing popular uprising in Iraq and in demonstration of the determination to continue until the fraudulent regime in Baghdad is overthrown, our revolutionaries launched a heroic attack today against the headquarters of the infantry regiment of the 34th division in Zayn al-Qaws, destroying it completely. After killing and wounding several of the regime's mercenaries, our revolutionaries liberated 110 soldiers and officers and confiscated large amounts of weaponry and equipment. [passage omitted]

Toward victory and liberation, our revolutionaries launched a successful lightning attack today against the units of the 9th brigade of the border guards in 'Ali al-Sharqi in the al-'Amarah Governorate, destroying it completely. More than 215 personnel belonging to that brigade were liberated and large amounts of weapons and equipment were confiscated. We will provide you with the names of the liberated persons as soon as we receive a list, God willing.

Fighting Reviewed; Saddam's Brother Said Killed

NC2403062491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Al-Hasakah—Brother Iraqis who arrived at al-Hawl camp in al-Hasakah last night stressed that the popular uprising is continuing and escalating. They say that the uprising is now marching toward Baghdad. In statements to a SANA correspondent in al-Hasakah, the Iraqis also stressed that the Iraqi regime's forces have used chemical weapons and surface-to-surface rockets against popular opposition in Karkuk and al-Najaf, killing a number of citizens.

The Iraqis—who arrived from the Governorates of Baghdad, Dahuk, and Mosul—said that the regime's forces have carried out widespread arrests and detained scores of citizens in Mosul to use them as human shields against rebel attacks. People arriving from Karbala' have stressed that the regime's forces have shelled the town with surface-to-surface rockets, killing innocent people. They also said that violent battles have taken place in Karkuk between the popular forces and the regime's forces and that Dahham al-Tikriti, Saddam Husayn's brother and director of his secret office, was killed during these battles. [passage omitted]

Shiite Leader on Rebellion, Planes in Iran

NC2203224991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2220 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—Imam Husayn al-Sadr, one of the leaders of the Shiite revolution in Iraq, has stated that the revolution has spread in various parts of Iraq and that some cities, like al-Najaf and Karbala', are entirely under rebel control.

In an interview with the newspaper AL-AHRAM, to be published tomorrow, al-Sadr said that Saddam Husayn's days in power are numbered.

He added that Saddam Husayn used mustard gas and other chemical weapons against the revolutionaries and that entire units of the Iraqi Army, with their weapons, have joined the rebels.

Imam al-Sadr disclosed that Iran has informed him that it will not return the 103 [figure as received] Iraqi planes that sought refuge in Iran during the Gulf war back to the Iraqi regime, particularly as these aircraft need maintenance that is unavailable at this time. He added that Iran told him that the majority of the planes' pilots have asked for political asylum in Iran.

Tehran TV Reports Executions in Governorates

NC2203182591 Paris AFP in English 1811 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 22 (AFP)—Rebel forces have executed five Iraqi military governors appointed recently by Baghdad. Iranian television quoted an Iraqi opposition radio station as saying.

The governors were from al-Kut, al-Nasiriyah, al-'Amarah and al-Basrah in the south and from "a northern region" which was not identified, the opposition "Voice of Rebellious Iraq" radio said.

Iranian radio meanwhile reported "very heavy fighting in the city and suburbs of Baghdad where Republican Guard units are imposing a curfew on the whole Iraqi capital and checking each entry to and exit from the city."

Rebel Radio Reports Division Leaders Captured

LD2203181991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The Voice of Rebellious [enqelabi] Iraq radio, which can be heard in Tehran, announced today that popular forces have captured most of the personnel under the command of (Staff Brigadier General Abd al-Jadid Abd al-Hamid Muhsin), the commander of the 20th Division of the Iraqi Ground Forces. The Voice of Rebellious Iraq also claimed that (Mahir Abd al-Rashid), the military commander of al-Nasiriyah; (Hisham al-Fakhri), the military commander of al-'Amarah; (Tali' al-Duri), the military commander of al-Basrah; (Talib al-Sa'dun), the military commander of al-Kut; and (Hasan al-Majid), the military commander of the northern regions of that country have been

killed by the revolutionary forces. The news has not been confirmed by other sources yet.

Army Officer on Intended Curfew in Provinces

*LD2303113691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Text] An Iraqi Army brigadier general captured by the popular forces has disclosed that the Iraqi regime intends to impose a curfew in the provinces facing unrest.

According to a report by IRNA, the Voice of Rebellious Iraq radio [raio seda-ye eraq-e enqelabi] announced the news and added: Staff Brigadier General 'Abd al-Jalil 'Abd al-Hamid Muhsin, commander of the 20th Division of the Ground Forces, who was captured by the people, named a number of top officers who are going to be appointed martial law administrators and added: A number of governors general from Iraqi provinces have also been killed by the people.

In another report, the radio reported the shelling of residential areas in a number of Iraq's northern and southern governorates and added: Official forces are using women and children as human shields in order to advance and infiltrate other regions.

The Voice of the Rebellious Iraq also reported continuing clashes in al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, and al-Samawah, and added: In the port of 'Ummal-Qasr, clashes and shootings are occurring between the official and popular forces.

According to the radio report, Staff Lieutenant General Nazar al-Khaz Raji, one of the Iraqi Army commanders in charge of the southern areas, has also been killed by the people.

Battles in Baghdad; Continuing Clashes in Al-Basrah

*NC2203165991 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1620 GMT
22 Mar 91*

[Text] Tehran, 22 Mar (SANA)—Popular forces have been engaging Iraqi Government troops in and around Baghdad.

Iraqi refugees fleeing the country add that following last night's curfew, massive demonstrations swept Baghdad today.

They reported continuing clashes in al-Basrah and high casualties among the pro-government forces, who were said to have used lethal weapons and to have martyred a large number of citizens.

Abu-al-Khasib and al-Zubayr are still controlled by the popular forces, despite napalm and phosphoric bombs being used in the attacks against the two cities, they add.

Al-'Amah, al-Mawsil, Karkuk, and Khanaqin remain in the hands of the popular forces, with a large number of Iraqi troops defecting or being taken prisoner. Government helicopters strafed Karkuk, killing or wounding

dozens of women and children. The artillery-equipped helicopters were said to have set fire to oil installations and the refinery in Karkuk.

The refugees said the commander of an army brigade had been taken prisoner, and the commander and members of the light regiments joined the ranks of the popular forces.

Local Officials Describe 'Agent Saboteurs' Acts

*NC2203154491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1345 GMT
22 Mar 91*

[Text] Dhi Qar, 22 Mar (INA)—A number of directors and officials of administrative and service departments in the Dhi Qar Governorate have affirmed that the agent saboteurs' crimes in the governorate are intended to destroy everything that provides public and human services in steadfast Iraq.

They told INA correspondent Iyad Kamil that these acts have affected all services facilities and government institutions that were established under the blessed 17-30 July revolution.

Rajih Thami Sa'ud, director general of the Dhi Qar Health Directorate, said that the mobs and troublemakers have destroyed and damaged many health institutions that provided the best health and medical services to citizens.

He added that the criminals have raided Saddam Public Hospital and completely burned its fifth and sixth floors. They also set fire to the doctors' dormitory, smashed windows, and stole ambulances, medical equipment, surgical instruments, blankets, and food.

He said the mobs have vandalized and looted pharmacies, medical appliances, the public surgical hospital in al-Nasiriyah, and the health center in Sumer, in addition to health establishments in districts and subdistricts of Dhi Qar Governorate.

Shakir Du'ayr al-Sudani, director general of the Dhi Qar Education Directorate, affirmed that the treasonous agents did not spare schools and kindergartens in the governorate.

He explained that this cowardly clique has attacked the General Education Directorate in the governorate and a number of preparatory, professional, and elementary schools, as well as kindergartens.

He said those demagogic criminals have set fire to and tampered with records, examination papers, school documents, textbooks, and stationery. He indicated that this proves they hate everything related to the educational process in proud and rising Iraq.

The director of Dhi Qar Citizenship and Civil Status Directorate said that the saboteurs—the enemies of God and humanity—have completely burned the Citizenship and Civil Status Directorate building in the governorate along with the furniture, records, civil status identification cards, and citizenship certificates.

He added that the criminals stole the directorate's vehicles and burned some of them. They also stole a bag of identification cards and seals.

The Central Market Directorate in Dhi Qar Governorate said that the infidel traitors set fire to the central market building in the governorate and stole all of its contents.

They also stole all commodities in the stores of the market, including electrical appliances, rugs, mattresses, fabrics, various types of clothing, glassware, foodstuffs, and baby milk. These materials were to be distributed to low-income citizens to whom central market books are issued.

AFP Reports Destruction in Karbala'

NC2203131991 Paris AFP in English 1151 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Nicosia, March 22 (AFP)—[passage omitted] An Agence France-Presse correspondent who visited Karbala' said corpses, rubble and refuse littered the streets of the city south of Baghdad, one week after government troops recaptured it over from rebel forces.

During a visit sponsored by the Iraqi Information Ministry—the first for local correspondents of foreign media—reporters saw uprooted trees, slabs of concrete, burned-out cars and twisted electricity pylons.

Karbala' looked as though it had been shaken by a powerful earthquake, the correspondent said, with few schools, government buildings, private homes or clinics that had not been destroyed.

Buildings still intact were riddled with bullets and their facades showed the apparent impact of rockets.

The 400-bed al-Husayni hospital was not spared by insurgents, said its director, Khadir Wahid al-Murshadi. "The rebels stole and destroyed all the equipment in the hospitals, which led to the death of hundreds of patients."

Iraqi Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih said the anti-government unrest had caused damage estimated at "several billion dollars." Rebels had stolen more than 40,000 tonnes of sugar and 4,000 tonnes of powdered milk, he said. [passage omitted]

In Teheran, the head of the Shiite opposition grouping SAIRI [Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq], Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, told AFP that Baghdad was planning to raze towns "up to 30 kilometres (20 miles) away from the border with Iran."

Residents of al-Tannumah, near al-Basrah, have been warned to evacuate the town within three days, he said, calling on U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar "to halt the massacre of the Iraqi people by Saddam Husayn."

SAIRI has claimed 10 cities in the south are in the hands of "revolutionaries," as well as the road linking Baghdad and al-Basrah, and that 15,000 people had been killed in the last four days in fighting in al-Najaf.

It has also reported unrest in the capital.

More than 1,000 Kuwaiti prisoners of war captured by Iraqi forces shortly after the August 2 invasion of Kuwait returned home Friday, with many describing the situation in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq as "explosive."

Kurdish rebel chief Jalal Talabani said in Damascus that he would return to his homeland Friday after three years in exile and reaffirmed he had no intention of forming an independent state in Iraqi Kurdistan.

In southern Iraq, refugees fleeing al-Basrah told AFP at a border post with Kuwait on Thursday that the Iraqi army had established full control in the outskirts of the country's second-largest city.

"The army, the Republican Guard, practically has al-Basrah under their control," said Khalid Abu-'Ali, referring to the best-equipped units of Iraq's army.

Defense Ministry Summons All Flatbed Trucks

NC2303094691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
0840 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Statement issued by the Defense Ministry's Directorate of Mobilization and Statistics on 23 March]

[Text] 1. To facilitate the transportation of equipment, we call on all owners of flatbed trucks in the Baghdad Governorate to assemble with their trucks in al-Nasr Square no later than today. Trucks in other governorates are to assemble near the governorates' buildings. The trucks will be supplied with fuel and their owners will be given a generous payment directly. Strict measures will be taken against all persons violating this call, including the confiscation of their trucks as of 1200 tomorrow, 24 March 1991.

2. The Public Traffic Department and the traffic departments in the governorates will supervise the assembly of these trucks, seize and confiscate all trucks whose owners violate this call, and provide the Directorate of Mobilization and Statistics with their registration numbers and the names of their owners.

[Signed] The staff major general, director of mobilization and statistics

Papers View 'Malicious' Cease-Fire Resolution

NC2403091291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0745 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—Two Iraqi newspapers have described the U.S. draft resolution presented to the UN Security Council Thursday as malicious, and they have called it a new chapter in the aggression. AL-JUMHURIYAH and AL-'IRAQ stress that brave Iraq and its knowledgeable leadership will foil any measure detrimental to Iraq's national sovereignty and to its people's capabilities and resources.

In an article today, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: The dimensions of many rancorous and wicked intentions of

the aggressive U.S. Administration over months of the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression against Iraq became clear. But even more wicked, aggressive, and rancorous dimensions have now become clear through the text of the U.S. draft resolution presented to the Security Council as a proposed formula for a cease-fire between Iraq and the alliance of aggression.

The paper adds: The aggression aimed at destroying Iraq politically, economically, and militarily through unjust resolutions incorrectly called "international resolutions". Those resolutions contradicted international laws and UN conventions concerning both the comprehensive economic blockade and the implementation of the military aggression itself. The items and vocabulary of the U.S. cease-fire draft resolution aim, as the text clearly shows, at usurping Iraq's sovereignty, mortgaging its will, and holding its wealth hostage. If it proposes some points that for a while appear "legal," it imposes extremely unjust conditions that have no link whatsoever to international law. All these conditions underscore the policy of double standards that the United States pursues in its dealings with world nations. They also perpetuate the policy of hegemony and aggression which the United States adopts and seeks to impose by brute force not only on Iraq but also on the world community at large.

The paper adds that the open and overt plotting against Iraq by the parties to the alliance of aggression, including the hypocritical, so-called Arabs and the traitor rulers who bore grudges against Iraq and its distinguished pan-Arab standing, was one of the main things that encouraged the United States to impose this aggressive and destructive policy on Iraq. Moreover, there are other reasons which became clear and known to every knowledgeable person, especially the old methods of plotting which the U.S. Administration has started to use again. These include encouragement and support for the elements of sabotage and riots in Iraq's cities and villages. Another factor is the weak international situation which gave the United States more scope for hegemony and control over the world community, especially considering the weakness of the Soviet Union, the disappearance of the country's political role in the world, and the opportunistic policies of a number of Soviet officials—policies suspiciously similar to those of the aggressive U.S. policy.

AL-JUMHURIYAH goes on to say: The U.S. cease-fire draft resolution is yet another page of the aggression against one country, namely Iraq, a constituent member of the United Nations which has played an acknowledged role in building human civilization and in maintaining security, stability, and peace in the region and the world. It is a draft that completes the previous chapters of the aggression, confirms the intentions of hatred for Iraq, and seeks to destroy it and terminate its unique role in the Arab world and international affairs. The various international bodies must realize the resolution's scope and help expose its vile and spiteful objectives.

In an article published today, AL-IRAQ says that the United States is underlining again its hostile and arrogant stand toward Iraq and its determination to rob it of

its will and sovereignty and to hold its national and pan-Arab resources hostage. This odious, repugnant, and despicable behavior was manifested by the first draft of the U.S. resolution distributed to the Security Council members last Thursday, 21 March. It adds: A critical look at this malicious draft, replete with provocative clauses, confirms the U.S. arrogance and its endeavor to bypass all the diplomatic traditions and norms that have been customary in draft resolutions submitted to the international organization since its inception in 1945.

The paper says: What the United States is aiming at is not the ending of the state of war in the Gulf region or ensuring a permanent cease-fire. What it is trying to do through twisted ways and means is to wrest Iraq's sovereignty, shackle its people with the chains of slavery, and interfere in affairs that are the basic components of the Iraqi people's national sovereignty and supreme interests. It is clear that President George Bush's administration, which has led the alliance of the armed aggression against Iraq, is determined to turn our country into a completely powerless province in the most sensitive part of the world and the most influential on the political and economic map. Suffice to say that this region contains the world's energy reserves.

AL-IRAQ adds: Our national leadership has stressed since before 2 August 1990 that Iraq has become a burden for the U.S. Administration because of its rejection of blackmail, procrastination, and successive threatening messages. The United States is today confirming that it will work to achieve through the United Nations and the Security Council what it has failed to achieve through aggression. The paper goes on to say: It is clear that the Bush administration would not have submitted this aggressive draft resolution if it did not believe that there are favorable circumstances made available to it by the troublemakers, saboteurs, and thugs who have lost the honor of citizenship after having sold themselves very cheaply to Iraq's historic enemies. The absence of the Soviet Union's role as a superpower and hence the weakness of its position as a permanent Security Council member has helped create the atmosphere that consecrates the United States as the power which has the "final" word in what the United Nations and the Security Council issue.

The paper stresses that proud Iraq and its leadership, which understands and realizes all these ploys and maneuvers played behind and in front of the curtains at the United Nations or away from it, will thwart any measure that aims to harm national sovereignty and tamper with the Iraqi people's fate and resources.

U.S. Cease-Fire Plan Aimed To Dominate Arabs

NC2503093091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0755 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—The U.S. Administration has never bothered to conceal its anti-Arab sentiment, nor has there been a lack of precedent showing the ugly American face.

In an editorial headlined "The American Plan, a Throwback to Colonialism," AL-QADISIYAH adds: Recent history abounds with examples of attempts to loot the resources of others and dominate them in the cause of an exclusive American control of the world.

The proposed American plan for a cease-fire only reinforces this picture. To advance its interests, the United States does not want any other nation to play its cultural and humanitarian role, and never misses a chance to trample on humanitarian values.

Reading the components of the American cease-fire plan, one cannot but conclude that the United States is out to dominate the Arab nation and help tip the regional balance of forces in favor of the Zionist state, AL-QADISIYAH adds.

The U.S. draft resolution before the UN Security Council, seeking as it does to usurp the sovereignty of the Arabs over their resources, in effect aims to undermine them, loot their resources, and break their will.

The hollowness of America's declared intentions to bring peace, security, and stability to the region is thus exposed. Indeed by giving the Zionist entity the military edge, the United States is moving the region closer to a new war, declared AL-QADISIYAH.

A plan aspiring to mortgage both the will and resources of the Arabs is objectionable and reprehensible, the paper concludes.

AL-THAWRAH Assails U.S. Draft Resolution

*NC2403115891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1045 GMT
24 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH strongly assails the U.S. draft resolution submitted to the UN Security Council, asserting that it exposes the U.S. Administration's blatant and aggressive intentions to rob Iraq of its sovereignty and mortgage its will and resources.

In an editorial today, AL-THAWRAH, organ of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, says that a quick reading of the cease-fire draft resolution unmasks the intentions and objectives of the imperialist-Zionist aggression against our people and country. It also clearly shows how far the U.S. Administration has gone in its aggressiveness, arrogance, and insistence on imposing its will and dictating its terms on Iraq in a way that serves its plans and the plans of its foster daughter, Israel, and secures its total control over the region.

AL-THAWRAH adds that all the paragraphs and clauses of the draft resolution are unjust and tantamount to blatant insistence on interfering in Iraq's internal affairs, contrary to all UN norms and charters. In addition, the draft resolution exposes the duplicity of the U.S. position on the region's issues.

It adds that the draft resolution completely ignores the rules of international law and disregards the stances and views of the Security Council members.

Referring to the factors and circumstances that encouraged the U.S. Administration to submit this draft resolution, AL-THAWRAH says that saboteurs and rioters who have infiltrated Iraq from a neighboring country to commit crimes of murder, destruction, looting, and arson in towns and villages in southern and northern Iraq, and who have raised slogans of hateful sectarianism and national division, are among the factors that encouraged the United States to try to dictate its terms on Iraq.

The newspaper adds that when the phase of direct military action failed to achieve the objective of the imperialist-Zionist plotting aimed at destroying Iraq and sowing frustration among its sons, the second phase began. The second phase is represented by this blind sedition and the slogans of sectarianism and national division which it has raised. The United States is striving to exploit this phase to achieve what it failed to gain through military aggression.

AL-THAWRAH says that the frail current international situation resulting from the weakness of the Soviet Union and its preoccupation with its internal issues and problems, in addition to the opportunism [intihaziyyat] of some Soviet officials, has also encouraged the U.S. Administration to persist in its arrogance and haughtiness and in its attempts to impose its terms on Iraq.

It adds that in presenting this draft resolution to the UN Security Council, the United States has fully exposed its true intentions and aims. It has also offered concrete evidence of its duplicity in dealing with the issues of the region.

AL-THAWRAH says that under the guise of international legitimacy, the United States is striving to achieve illegal aims that contravene the UN Charter and the rules of international law. The United States is eager to achieve the aims of its allies in Tel Aviv before any other aims. The U.S. draft resolution indicates the gravity of the goals of the Bush administration to impose its unilateral authority on the international community and submit it to its will and interests alone.

Radio Discusses U.S. 'Crimes', 'Agent' Regimes

*NC2303095891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
0812 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning: The barking voices over the agents' radios and the disgraceful hoarse throats that are attacking Iraq these days and fabricating lies and news in a shameful and dishonorable way—these rented voices—seem to forget that this is not the first time the people of Iraq have faced a flow of false facts and realities that only exist in the sick minds and weak souls that dream of destroying Iraq, subjugating its people, humiliating its citizens, and seizing their creative potential in the various directions and fields.

This steadfast militant people know now more than ever that these rented voices are as ridiculous and miserable as the acts carried out by the despotic cliques which were condemned by the people who issued the just judgement against them after they saw their hands stained with the blood of the innocent people of Iraq and saw their cowardly acts. [passage indistinct]

O brothers, we mention this because we cannot imagine the existence of such people, who sold themselves to the devil and devoted their voices and what is left of their [word indistinct] and conscience to justify the crime and to (?beautify) the picture of those who committed the most dreadful acts against the homeland and humanity.

What were the results? And what [words indistinct] after all that they have committed against the people of Iraq? [words indistinct] Do they believe that the herds of barbarians and mobs can make us as well as all the honorable men in the Arab nation and the world forget the crimes committed by America, Zionism, and their allies against brave militant Iraq and its courageous militant people? Can any free Iraqi or Arab forget for one moment the barbaric acts carried out by the advocate of the alleged civilization, America, against the Iraqi people and civilization? No, O brothers; no and one thousand no's. These acts [words indistinct] will not make us forget for one moment the size of the crime carried out by America and the imperialist West or the pan-Arab high treason committed by the agents of America. [words indistinct] Egypt, and Syria. No, we will not forget this. The nation's masses, which are now witnessing the (?crimes) of Fahd, Husni, and Hafiz of disgrace and treason, will have their say one day against these agent regimes. [words indistinct]

'Neighboring Country' Accused of Helping 'Rabble'

NC2303095291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0825 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH has said Iraq had hoped that the initiatives it announced would purify the hearts of those who are trying to interfere in its internal affairs.

In an editorial today entitled "What Do the Neighbors Gain From Acts of Sabotage?" the paper asserts that events of recent days have proved, however, that rancor still fills their hearts despite their false Islamic claims.

The paper says that the rabble who committed brutal acts in al-Basrah, al-Nasiriyah, al-'Amarah, al-Hallah, Karbala', and al-Najaf cities grew up under the wing of this neighbor and that they received their training there and crossed into Iraq from its territory, carrying weapons provided by that country's authorities.

The paper notes that many Arabs and Muslims may have been deceived by the public stands of this neighboring country, including its proclamation of neutrality in the Gulf war and its denunciation of any attempt to destroy Iraq's people. However, the paper says, it seems they had

drawn up their plans with great care and waited for the right moment to pounce on Iraq.

Concluding its editorial, the paper stresses that this country has forgotten that the eight-year-long war between Iraq and Iran was aimed at destroying both Iraq and Iran so that an independent force outside the compass of American hegemony would remain [as received] in the region. They have also forgotten that America and Israel do not want either of the two parties to emerge powerful with all the strength of independence.

Paper Urges Lifting 'Unjust' Blockade

NC2303093191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0735 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH, the Defense Ministry's organ, says that the entire world is now facing a difficult test to lift the unjust economic blockade on the people of Iraq, or else all states will fall one after the other in the U.S. trap.

In an article today, the newspaper says that the Iraqi people and Army, who stood fast against the most ferocious onslaught in history and who were subjected to an unjust blockade and military aggression by more than 30 states, are not asking for a favor but for their natural right to survival. The article adds that Iraq appeals to the world to give it its human rights and to lift the blockade. The world must provide another opportunity for honest people to resist the U.S. tendency for domination and to expose the aims of the new world order advocated by Bush, who is carrying the whip of his military machine with which he is threatening the world.

AL-QADISIYAH stresses that the entire world now stands before a difficult test to confront U.S. brutality and to prevent the law of the jungle from prevailing. The United States wants this law to govern the world and it wants to play the role of the monster in its application.

The newspaper stresses that immediately lifting the blockade against Iraq is not only a human need; after the destruction and sabotage inflicted by the U.S. aggression on Iraq's infrastructure and after the acts of looting, destruction, and arson committed by criminal gangs in Iraq's cities, it has become an urgent need for the Iraqi people so that they may prevent the hazards to environment, health, society, and human life and in order to speed up the reconstruction of what has been damaged by the aggression.

AL-QADISIYAH stresses that for these reasons the unjust blockade should be lifted so that the Iraqi people may resume their normal life, guaranteed by laws, divine values, and human ideals, which the Bush administration and other criminal rulers and filthy agents neither know nor recognize.

Opposition Leader on Regime's 'Unprecedented' Crimes

NC2303081791 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0515 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Shaykh Muhammad Husayn al-Tajir, spokesman for the Islamic Action Organization in Iraq, has said that

the Iraqi regime is committing crimes of an unprecedented nature in its attempts to quell the rebellion throughout Iraq.

Shaykh al-Tajir said in a statement yesterday that the Iraqi regime is using children as human shields to ward off attacks by the forces of the popular uprising. It is also burning the bodies of martyrs and mujahidin before the eyes of demonstrators in the cities of Karbala' and al-Basrah.

Shaykh al-Tajir added that a very loud explosion was heard in the city of al-Basrah at the largest arms and ammunition depot of the Iraqi regime's forces. He said this explosion was the uprising forces' appropriate response to the regime's forces.

Opposition Cleric Says Saddam's Days Numbered

LD2403125791 Tehran IRNA in English 1205 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Athens, Mar. 24, IRNA—An Islamic revolutionary leader from Iraq in an interview Saturday said free and fair elections would be held in Iraq soon after the end of the dictatorial rule of Saddam Husayn whose days are numbered.

Imam Husayn al-Sadr, spiritual leader to millions of Iraqi Shia Muslims, in an interview with Egyptian daily AL-AHRAM said an interim government consisting of the Islamic bloc, national bloc and the Kurds would be formed to pave the way for elections under Arab and international supervision after the fall of Saddam.

"If the people of Iraq chose a rule of Islamic pattern we would be happy, and if they do not elect it we shall respect the result of the ballot boxes," he told the Cairo newspaper.

Al-Sadr was the president of the recently-held conference of over 17 Iraqi opposition groups in Beirut aimed at coordination the people's uprising against the Baathist rule of Saddam Husayn. [sentence as received]

The Islamic leader accused Saddam Husayn of destroying Islam in the name of Arabism and Arabism in the name of Islam.

"The post-Saddam Iraq would differ completely from the Iraq of Saddam. The Iraq of Saddam waged war against Islam in the name of Arabism and then waged war against Arabism in the name of Islam."

He stressed that post-Saddam Iraq will have good ties with all Arab and Muslim countries.

Asked to comment on some Arab fears on the close cooperation between Iran and the leaders of the uprising, particularly the Shia of Iraq, Imam Sadr replied that such fears were exaggerated.

"I believe in the necessity of the independence of Iraq's political integrity - independence from neighbouring powers or from the regional and international powers.

"I personally believe that there are a lot of exaggerations in these fears," he said.

The Iraqi Islamic leader said he did not think that Iran would return the Iraqi planes that had sought refuge in the Islamic republic.

Commentary Scorns 'Alien Intruders', Crimes

NC2503124991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1009 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Those who try to fish in muddied waters and exploit the difficult circumstances in Iraq brought about by the U.S.-allied aggression prove without a shadow of a doubt that they are not of this country, and will always be dastardly enemy agents. The shameful acts they have perpetrated in Iraqi cities and governorates in the north and south have revealed that America's plot to strike at Iraq and liquidate the Iraqi revolution has not succeeded, and that the new task of these criminals is primarily aimed at realizing what America failed to accomplish in its all-out war of aggression against Iraq.

While saddened by this premeditated destruction which the mobs perpetrated against people's interests, we are certain that Iraq, whose noble and honorable people were able to put down the sedition and expose the ugly faces hidden behind it, has shown the whole world a better picture of the size of the plot concocted to wipe out its cultural achievements and its desire to live a free, decent life.

We pity the slogans raised by those who agreed to be servants and slaves to the foreigners, destroying people's property, tampering with people's security, and burning people's means of livelihood. We pity these slogans raised by those who had insisted on fighting America, punishing the arch satan, and protecting the sacred Arab Islamic soil from colonialist feet and domination by the states of world arrogance.

We really pity those who raised these slogans. We never thought that one day they would reach such a level of meanness and lowliness, prompted by their spite against Iraq and its steadfast mujahid people. However, the Iraqi people, who had experienced their evil methods and intentions, have handed down the verdict on them and recorded in the memory of their sons black pages of their cowardly deeds. Those who thought that the Iraqi people would forgive and forget the crimes of the alien intruders and their masters must now change their strategies, because what happened will be yet another new factor to strengthen cohesion and enhance the people's determination to realize the national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian aims for which the Iraqis have fought, and for which they sacrificed their nearest and dearest to attain.

Primary, Secondary School Students Resume Classes

NC2303160791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1450 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—Classes resumed in Iraq today at kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, institutions for qualifying teachers, and fine arts institutions. They had been suspended because of the aggression against our struggling country.

Students of the abovementioned scholastic categories in Baghdad and the governorates resumed their studies today. [passage omitted]

Jasim Calls For Arab, International Support

NC2403204491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1955 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—Latif Nusayyif Jasim, member of the regional command and the official in charge of foreign relations in the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, has addressed a message to all fraternal and friendly parties in the Arab homeland and the world, calling for escalating the denunciation campaign and expressing solidarity with the steadfast Iraqi people. He also called on these parties to work relentlessly to expose the false claims of the imperialist aggressors and their Atlantic and Zionist agents, who have clothed themselves in the mantle of international legitimacy.

Jasim said that the unjust resolutions of the UN Security Council, including Resolution 678, did not legalize the destruction of Iraq and its infrastructure and civilization in such a hateful, aggressive, and barbarian manner.

He said the U.S. Administration exploited what it calls international legitimacy to overpower the region, enslave its sons, seize its wealth, and control its energy for the ultimate goal of securing its own interests in the region, in collaboration with the agent rulers.

He said the new world order cannot be built on arrogance, greed, and discrimination. He stressed that international legitimacy should be applied in accordance with international principles, rather than with the selective and [word indistinct] approach adopted by the United States and its allies.

Jasim said that a portion of the sums that funded the aggressive war against Iraq should have been allocated to world economic, social, and cultural problems.

Referring to the mobbish acts committed by saboteurs in some Iraqi governorates, Jasim said the saboteurs were involved in deliberate and massive subversion that was funded by well known foreign parties. He said the destruction extended to hospitals, universities, schools, nurseries, courts, places of worship, food stores, citizens homes and properties, and public utilities such as electricity and water plants and oil refineries.

Concluding his message, Latif Nusayyif Jasim appealed to fraternal and friendly parties and honest people of the world to raise their voices in denunciation of these bloody crimes against Iraq; to demonstrate against the aggressive war on our people; and to demand an end to the economic embargo and an end to attempts to halt the upsurging march of glorious Iraq under the leadership of President symbol Saddam Husayn, may the Almighty protect and guide him.

Couple Stabbed in Hasharon District by Gaza Arab

TA2303121791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1200 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] There was another stabbing today against a nationalistic background. This time the attack took place in the Sharon District.

Our correspondent Yaffa Glick reports that this morning an Arab youth from Gaza stabbed an Israeli couple in their 40's near Moshav Gannot Hadar, near the Bayt Lid intersection. They were slightly injured and taken by ambulance to the hospital. The assailant was captured and is now being interrogated by the police.

Suspect Admits 20 Mar Murder

TA2303141591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1340 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpt] The Gazan who was captured this morning after he stabbed a couple in Hasharon District, admitted he had murdered Mordekhay Reichman from Hadera [on 20 March]. The police are also examining his possible involvement in a stabbing incident in Baqa al-Gharbiyyah this morning. Our police affairs correspondent 'Ido Baum has the initial details:

During the investigation by the Hasharon District Police this morning, the suspect admitted he murdered Mordekhay Reichman from Hadera last week. The police say there is reason to assume that he did actually commit the murder, meaning, they believe him.

The suspect, a resident of Gaza City who this morning stabbed and injured a couple in Ginot Hadar near Netanya, was found in possession of a hand-written leaflet explaining his motives. He links himself with the Islamic Jihad organization, and the leaflet contains malicious remarks against Jews and the State of Israel. The police suspect he knew the man he murdered in Hadera. The leaflet also claims that Mr. Reichman is one of those Jews who stole lands from the Palestinians, and therefore it had been decided that he should be murdered.

The police are also examining what they term a reasonable suspicion that the Gazan also stabbed a resident of Jisr al-Zarqa in a shop in Baqa al-Gharbiyyah this morning. The victim is now hospitalized in serious condition. Of the couple that was stabbed this morning, the man was moderately wounded and will be operated on soon, and his wife, who had her finger cut off, is being operated on at this moment in Tel Hashomer Hospital. [passage omitted]

Government Adopts Measures To Counter Violence

Fatah Activists To Be Deported

TA2403045891 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
0400 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Deportation orders against four senior Fatah activists in the Gaza Strip have been issued. The four—

Jamal Yasin Hasan Abu-Habil, Muhin Muhammad Masalim, Hashim Muhammad 'Ali-Dahlan, and Jamal 'Abd-al-Rabbuh 'Abu-Ra'din—are all in their 30's. Three of the four were released from prison in the Ahmad Jibril prisoner exchange some six years ago. The victims of yesterday's attack, meanwhile, in Moshav Gannot Hadar near Netanya have been operated on and are reported to be in stable condition. This report from Dani Gur-Arye:

[Begin Gur-Arye recording] The four Gaza men ordered deported have all been convicted in the past of violent activities. Two of the men have served prison sentences for throwing hand grenades at the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. The third man was sentenced to prison on a similar charge and the fourth was sentenced to life for killing an Arab in jail. Two of the four have also been in administrative detention since their release from prison six years ago and, according to military sources, they continued their hostile activity throughout this period. The four men are Fatah activists, raising question over the direct link between their deportation and the recent knifing attacks inside the Green Line. The recent attacks have all been carried out by Muslim extremists belonging either to the Islamic Jihad organization or to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

Senior military officials were quoted last night as saying that deportation is the most effective measure in deterring violence. Police Minister Roni Milo and his senior aides are considering other measures, including banning unmarried male residents of the territories from entering Israel. The deportation order was signed by the head of the Army's Southern Command, Major General Matan Vilna'i. The four men may appeal to a military court. If their appeal is rejected, they are allowed to appeal to the High Court of Justice. [passage omitted] [end recording]

For a reaction to the recent attack and the deportation order, reporter Dani Gur-Arye spoke with Energy Minister Yuval Ne'eman.

[Begin recording] [Ne'eman] There is no deterrence in the fact that we have no death sentence. These people, the knifing, are ready to kill and then, in fact, even they are sometimes ready to get killed. The only way to deter them is to find some punishment that touches them and that can influence their decision. I think deportation and I would say deportation with one's family, that is something that can have an influence.

[Gur-Arye] You said yesterday, Minister Ne'eman, that there shouldn't be any diplomatic initiative as long as the uprising was going on. How can the uprising be dealt with without a diplomatic initiative?

[Ne'eman] I think there really is no room for a diplomatic initiative. The uprising is clearly an indication on the part of the Arabs in the territories that they don't want to live in peace with us, and there is no reason to conduct any kind of talk, neither with them nor with the Arab countries, as long as this is going on. [end recording]

Deportations To Continue

TA2403055591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0600 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Dani Nave, the defense minister's media adviser, says that deportation will continue to be used as a tool against individuals who dabble in incitement and the creation of an atmosphere of hatred for the Jews, which breeds acts of violence and murder. Security sources have said that, during the Gulf war, Israel abstained from deporting people, but after the war the wave of murders resumed. The chief agitators renewed their activity and stoked up violent activity. The defense establishment's policy is to act against the hard core while trying not to affect the population at large. The security sources reported that measures to ease the lives of the residents of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza district are being considered. Anyone who deals in terrorism, however, works against the general populace's interest in restoring normal life. The last expulsion occurred shortly before the outbreak of the Gulf war, when four senior Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists from the Gaza Strip were deported after three Jews were killed in Yafo [on 14 December 1990].

Arens Describes Countermeasures

TA2403062991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0500 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Good morning, Defense Minister Moshe Arens.

[Arens] Good morning.

[Zohar] We heard in the Defense Ministry's statement to the press that these deportations involve the hard core of the intifadah leadership in the territories. Can the four also be linked to the wave of stabbings over the past few days?

[Arens] Yes, definitely. We are talking about people who have urged murder, creating an atmosphere that ultimately leads to murders.

[Zohar] So why use the means of deportation? Once again the question arises: Why should these people not be put on trial? Would that not be more effective?

[Arens] Because all the elements that deal with this problem agree that deportation is one of the most effective weapons at our disposal.

[Dan] What do you mean by effective? How is this measured?

[Arens] I think that is a relatively easy task, because if we deport a person who incites to violence, that will presumably have a certain effect.

[Dan] Will his ability to act from the outside be totally inhibited?

[Arens] You mean from outside Israel?

[Dan] Yes.

[Arens] I would not say that he would lose all ability to act, but I think everyone understands that his ability to influence from anywhere outside Israel's boundaries would be much more limited.

[Dan] Do you think the measure is also effective as a deterrent?

[Arens] We hope that it has that effect as well.

[Zohar] How is this punishment perceived? Is it considered a tougher or more lenient measure than standing trial, from the residents' point of view?

[Arens] You should ask them that. I believe it is seen as a rather heavy punishment.

[Zohar] Does the fact that the deportation does not take place immediately, because of the legal process, not detract from the impact of the move?

[Arens] I think it would have been more advisable if it had been possible to carry out deportations immediately, but we must act according to the law, and we do so. The processes connected with the law are extended and take a certain time.

[Zohar] There have been many deportations since the beginning of the intifadah. Has anyone followed up on what happens to the deportees to find out whether they have a certain aura of heroism in their organizations as a result of the expulsions?

[Arens] I believe that if I ask you or other Palestinian Arabs who the deported individuals are and what they do now, I will find out that they have, by and large, been forgotten and no one pays any attention to them.

[Zohar] If that is the case, then why not employ this penalty more consistently or apply it to larger numbers of individuals?

[Arens] I think we use it quite consistently. As for larger numbers, we do it in the amount we deem warranted.

[Zohar] As for the timing of the deportations, we have heard that during the war Israel refrained from expelling individuals. After the war, there have been reports about appeals from the Arab countries—some may even have been transmitted directly by Secretary Baker—that as part of the initial concessions we are expected to make, we should stop the expulsions.

[Arens] If it were possible to appeal to the people who incite to murder to make concessions, quit calling for murder, and make sure no more stabbings occur, perhaps that would be a deal that could be discussed. As you

no doubt understand, however, no one can persuade the people who deal in killings to end those acts.

[Dan] With your permission, we would like to move on to that phenomenon. A few days ago the prime minister gave what may be seen as his word that a plan exists to eliminate the phenomenon. Can you tell us whether such a plan truly exists? Can there be one?

[Arens] I am not authorized to speak for the prime minister.

[Dan] How, then, can we act to control that phenomenon? But before you answer that, can you tell us whether the stabbings are all spontaneous, random, and unforeseeable acts committed by individuals, or whether some organized operation is behind them?

[Arens] I believe the correct way of viewing this phenomenon is to realize the very sad fact that a certain percentage of the Arab population of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza district—a far too large percentage—is very extreme. Those people do not value human life at all and are prepared to kill Jews at all costs. Some have said, after the murder of the four women in Jerusalem [during Secretary Baker's visit], that the man wanted to kill peace. That, too, may be true, but I think that a better description of the act would be that that individual wanted to murder Jews. That is the phenomenon, and that is what we must combat. There is not a single means to overcome the phenomenon. We must use all the means at our disposal, among them, primarily, the alertness of the public. Some people are armed; there are many soldiers and officers in the public. Additionally, of course, the police and the defense establishment will employ the means at their disposal.

[Zohar] To what extent is the increase in the phenomenon, as you call it, the outcome of the employment and economic difficulties in the territories?

[Arens] Look, according to the principles known in the civilized world, there can be no link between the two, because none of us are prepared to justify, or even admit, any link whatsoever between the fact that a person may experience economic woes or be out of a job and his reaching the conclusion that he should kill people. Still, I believe that if you go over the list of murderers recently, you will see that they were not unemployed.

[Dan] Would it be possible to contemplate, among the measures that can and should be used against the phenomenon, restricting—or perhaps even completely banning—residents of the territories from crossing the Green Line? Would you support such a move?

[Arens] We supervise the people from Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza district who are employed in Israel, but I think that anyone who thinks that it is possible to separate Jews from Arabs is simply cut off from the Israeli reality.

[Zohar] In terms of the manpower needed in Israel?

[Arens] In every respect. Jews and Arabs live together here, and we cannot separate them.

[Zohar] One last question: You said that statistically it was impossible to find a link between unemployment and stabbings. Yet it has been argued that it is a statistical fact that the murderers were all single. Will you support limiting the entry of single persons into Israel?

[Dan] That is the police affairs minister's proposal.

[Arens] You will forgive me if I reserve my comment on the specifics for the debate that will be held in the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs.

[Zohar] Defense Minister Moshe Arens, thank you very much and have a good morning.

[Arens] Shalom.

Comments Further on Situation

TA2403172191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by political correspondent Shlomo Gioron on 24 March at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv; in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Gioron] Will all of the strict regulations apply to everyone, or will the authorities differentiate between people?

[Arens] Of course we differentiate between people. Those Arabs who will be deported actively engage in incitement to commit violence.

[Gioron] Does this not clash with the U.S. request not to adopt stringent measures or resume a policy of deportations?

[Arens] We have differences with the U.S. Administration regarding this matter. This did not begin yesterday. We understand their position, and I hope that they understand ours. Our primary duty is to act in order to calm things down and prevent murder and violence. We are obligated to adopt any and all measures that in our opinion may be effective in this campaign.

[Gioron] Mr. Arens, political conventions are currently taking place in the territories. What is the significance of these political conventions? What is your opinion, as defense minister, of these conventions?

[Arens] I am at a bit of a loss for a response, as I was not invited to any of these meetings. If this means we are beginning the process toward holding elections in the territories, however, this is good, because this, in my opinion, is the most important milestone that we must pass in moving toward the peace process—elections in the territories according to the Israeli Government's peace plan.

[Ganor] Can you confirm tonight that there is a Defense Ministry plan to conduct elections in the territories?

[Arens] If you are speaking in a general sense without pointing to a specific date on the calendar, then this idea has been around for nearly two years—ever since the May 1989 peace initiative. We have been dealing with the issue since then and have been trying to prepare the groundwork and bring about a situation in which the terrorist organizations will not be able to terrorize the populace—a state of affairs in which people will feel free both to run as candidates and to vote.

[Ganor] Can you give us a projected date? What still must happen before elections can be held in the territories?

[Arens] I am sad to say that I cannot give you a date at this time. It is clear to everyone, however, that what is needed is calm in the territories. The people must have a sense of security and feel that they can occupy themselves with the elections and vote freely.

[Ganor] And we still have quite a way to go before this?

[Arens] We spoke about the violence against Israelis before. I am sad to say that we are witnessing violence against the Arabs in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip on an almost daily basis—violence that is perpetrated by the activists of the terror organizations.

[Ganor] Mr. Arens, moving the peace process forward requires mutual confidence-building measures between the relevant parties. What steps would you, as defense minister, expect the Arab side to take both in the territories and in the Arab countries in order to build mutual trust?

[Arens] If we are talking about the territories, then I think that the Israeli Government and most of the people in the territories share a mission, and that is to push aside the terrorists and the men of violence. I think this is a joint goal both for the Arab population of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip and for us here. No confidence-building steps would be actually required if we were to achieve calm. This is something that necessitates joint action, and I think that it would lead to mutual trust. As for the Arab countries, the matter is quite clear: Those states that consider themselves to be in a state of war with Israel must declare that they want peace with Israel and are willing to sit down with Israel at the negotiating table in order to reach peace.

[Ganor] According to the information in your possession, are we close to such a declaration by the Arab states on the cessation of the state of war with Israel?

[Arens] I wish I could tell you that the answer to that is yes. We hear that the climate is better, that the mood is more positive, and that during Secretary of State Baker's tour the extremist statements that are generally trumpeted in the Arab capitals were no longer heard. This, therefore, could offer an encouraging sign.

[Ganor] But nothing concrete yet?

[Arens] There will be something concrete on the day that an Arab country today at a state of war with Israel—or its leader or president—will announce that he would like to meet with the prime minister of Israel.

Cabinet Discusses Countermeasures

TA2403111791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1000 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The cabinet today heard reports from the police commissioner and security elements on the exacerbation of the intifadah. It was decided that an in-depth discussion of the issue will be held on Wednesday by the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs. Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi contended that the intifadah has assumed its prewar dimensions in both scope and severity, while the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] refrains from entering villages where riots are staged. Defense Minister Moshe Arens said that no part of the country is out of bounds for the IDF.

Minister Yuval Ne'eman reiterated his demand for broad expulsion penalties that could also be applied to stone throwers and their families. Minister Ehud Olmert told our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen at the end of the cabinet session that the correct way to stem the rise in violence is to inspect more closely the Arabs entering from the territories, and to make sure they go back across the Green Line at the end of the work day.

Security Forces To Limit Travel

TA2403182491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1600 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The police, the IDF, and the Shin Bet support the proposal to ban single men from the territories from entering the Green Line. This transpired this evening during a meeting convened by the police minister. It was also decided to recommend increased responsibility for Jewish employers, as well as an increase in their role of enforcing the limitations imposed on the travel of workers from the territories to Israel.

Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that Police Minister Milo will bring these recommendations before the Cabinet this Wednesday [27 March]. Minister Milo will leave for Tokyo next week upon the invitation of the Japanese Government. The Cabinet approved his trip today.

Shamir Vetos Arens Recommendation

TA2503095891 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew
25 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Report by On Levi, Mikhal Sela', DAVAR's U.S. correspondent, and Hemi Shalev]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Defense Minister Moshe Arens was counseled by the Shin Bet and the IDF command in the Gaza Strip to deport more than four

activists from the Strip. Senior defense establishment sources have said that there was evidence implicating each one of them in involvement in hostile terrorist activity. The defense minister accepted the recommendation, but Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir overruled it.

This is not the first time that the prime minister has ignored the defense minister's recommendations on expulsions. The same occurred about four months ago, when the defense minister recommended the expulsion of seven senior PLO activists and the prime minister vetoed it, approving the deportation of only four activists. [passage omitted]

'Serious Riots' Protest Expulsion Order

TA2503114291 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
25 Mar 91 p A3

[Text] Serious riots erupted yesterday in the Jabalyah refugee camp as word spread about the expulsion orders issued by Matan Vilna'i, the commander of the Southern Command, against four Fatah activists in the Gaza Strip, three of whom reside in the camp. The fourth is a resident of nearby Bayt Lahiyah.

Palestinian sources reported that 12 locals were hurt in these incidents. The representative of the IDF spokesman in the Gaza Strip reported four injuries in Jabalyah. The incidents erupted during the morning hours, when locals began throwing rocks at IDF troops. Additional forces were rushed into the camp, and they suppressed the rioting.

A Dayr al-Balah youth was shot after ignoring calls to halt at a roadblock and continuing to drive. The proper procedures for apprehending a suspect were employed against him, and when he failed to stop, the soldiers manning the roadblock shot and wounded him. Military sources in the Southern Command have reported that no curfews are in force in the Gaza Strip and that, with the exception of Jabalyah, the area was relatively quiet.

The body of a 60-year-old shepherd was discovered yesterday afternoon near Bi'r Zayt in the Ramallah area. He had been knifed to death. The Ramallah police sent his body to the Abu-Kabir Forensic Institute.

Muslim worshipers yesterday assaulted Rabbi Shmuel Gottlieb at the Shalshet Gate entrance to the Temple Mount, where he wanted to pray. The police reported that a Muslim mob, led by one of the Temple Mount shaykhs, tried to prevent the rabbi from holding prayers. The shaykh is also suspected of trying to lunge at the rabbi with his umbrella. A Border Police unit at the site blocked the rabbi from entering the gate and dispersed the crowd. There have been no reports on arrests and no one was hurt. The rabbi went to the Old City police station, where he submitted a detailed affidavit.

A strike protesting the death of a Nur al-Shams youth by IDF fire two days ago was held in Tulkarm yesterday. The youth, Jihad Zagzud, age 20, who had been wanted

by the security forces, was killed by soldiers when he tried to organize a march by young men near the village of Iktabah.

Palestinian sources reported yesterday that armed masked individuals kidnapped Janin resident Munir al-Rifa'i from his home, after first frightening him by firing twice in the air. His whereabouts are not known. Yesterday the IDF lifted the curfew on the Tulkarm refugee camp and on the towns of Qabatiyah and Tubas. In 'Awarta, on the other hand, the curfew remains in effect for the 28th day running. The locals complain that the IDF has been preventing them from going to the outdoor water wells and ovens.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 25 March adds: "Last night the Army sealed the home of Iman 'Ali Abu-Aryan, of Bayt Lahiyah in the Gaza Strip, who is suspected of having stabbed two soldiers in Hod Hasharon last week."]

Qiryat Arba' Residents To Be Given to U.S.

TA2403174791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1605 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Report by police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum]

[Text] Rahel and Bob Manning from Qiryat Arba' were detained today by the Judeaea District Police. They are suspected of involvement in the murder of a PLO activist several years ago in the United States. Bob Manning is a known Kakh activist. The couple immigrated to Israel a few years ago. Three years ago Rahel Manning went for a visit to the United States, where she was detained and questioned for several months in connection with this murder. Consequently, she was released and came back to Israel.

Recently, the U.S. authorities have appealed to Israel with a request to hand over the couple, apparently after additional evidence was gathered indicating they are linked with the murder of the PLO representative. The State Attorney's Office is now making the arrangements, and their detention will be extended tomorrow.

Palestinians Discuss PLO, U.S., Intifadah

TA2303202691 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Hebrew 1915 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] These days, Palestinians have been debating the manner in which to continue the intifadah, in view of the criticism leveled at local activists, and in view of the demands to reexamine the shape of the strikes and the nature of the relations between the residents of the territories and the PLO. Faysal al-Husayni and his friends have started a series of discussions, open to the public, in which overt discussions of these issues are being held.

One such meeting was held last night in Jerusalem. The organizers did not allow filming or recording of the exchange of remarks, but media representatives were

allowed to attend the whole discussion. Our correspondent in the territories Amir Hay reports:

[Begin Hay recording] Another discussion of Palestinian public figures before an audience was held today at the al-Haqawati Theater in East Jerusalem. This is the second time that the authorities did not prevent a political assembly of this kind, which openly discusses issues of the intifadah. The discussion itself was closed to the cameras, but not to the media.

The public discussion was conducted by Faysal al-Husayni and Riyad al-Maliki. Among the issues discussed were: how should the PLO deal with the attacks against it after the Gulf war; should a ban on contacts with the Americans be reinstituted; does the intifadah need a reexamination and a change of methods?

Some of the audience claimed that the PLO's support of Iraq has weakened its status and caused damage to the residents of the territories. Al-Husayni replied that today the Palestinians have the ability to prevent an arrangement they do not favor, but they cannot force an agreement. He stressed that the demand for Palestinian independence is just half the story, the other part is a recognition of Israel. Al-Maliki, on the other hand, stated that the United States should be regarded as an enemy.

Some of the public demanded that the nature of the strikes be changed, and that the local leadership be given more power. To conclude, these discussions were held to demonstrate that al-Husayni and his friends do hold a dialogue with the public, in view of claims that they act while ignoring the public's feelings much too often. [end recording]

Roundup of Incidents in Territories 21 Mar

TA2203120791

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 22 March in a page 2 report by Bill Hutman reports that "the police have reversed their decision to close an East Jerusalem high school for two weeks, after the city's Education Authority demanded that the entire school not be forced to suffer because of the action of a few. Al-Rashidiyah High School, shut down after a stone-throwing incident Wednesday, is being allowed to reopen tomorrow according to Victor Gabi, in charge of East Jerusalem schools at the authority."

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 22 March in a page A3 report by Yizhar Be'er and Eytan Rabin reports that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] imposed a curfew on the village of Bi'r Naballah [place name as published], north of Jerusalem, following the incident in which 11-year-old Qeren Wayman, of Pisgat Ze'ev, was wounded on Tuesday night when her skull was broken by a rock.

The IDF yesterday lifted the 13-day curfew on the Nur al-Shams refugee camp in the Tulkarm area. The curfew on 'Anabta in the same area has now entered its 22d day,

while the curfew on 'Awarta near Nabulus continued yesterday for the 25th day running."

The report said that dozens of olive trees were uprooted along a main traffic route in the Janin area where stones were hurled at Israeli cars. The IDF decided to resume the reunion of families in the Gaza Strip in a few days time. "There were clashes in the Gaza Strip yesterday. Palestinian sources reported three casualties in Rafah and one in Gaza as a result of stone-throwing incidents at IDF troops."

A 40-year-old resident of Bani-Suhaylah in the Gaza Strip was stabbed to death yesterday on suspicion of cooperating with the authorities.

Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 22 March reports that "a 16-year-old youth was seriously wounded in the al-Shaja'iyah neighborhood of Gaza by soldiers' gunfire.

"Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that an IDF patrol was ambushed in al-Shaja'iyah and cinder blocks were hurled at the troops. The soldiers were forced to open fire. One youth was injured and taken to Tel Hashomer Hospital.

This morning, the IDF clamped a curfew on the town of Nabulus and the surrounding refugee camps. Our correspondent notes that the curfew was probably imposed after it became clear that the Arab who stabbed a soldier last night in Bene Beraq, lived in Nabulus. Our correspondent further reports that the curfew was lifted this morning from the village of 'Anabta in Samaria after being imposed for 23 consecutive days."

24 Mar Intifadah Incidents Include Death of Arab

TA2403110691

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 24 March in a page 10 report by Jon Immanuel says: "A young man was killed yesterday in a clash with troops after using a loudspeaker to incite villagers in Iktabah, near Tulkarm, military sources said.

"The sources said three youths who were inciting villagers to demonstrate clashed with an army patrol during the incident. Soldiers fired and the man was fatally wounded." The killed man was reportedly a fugitive suspected of killing a resident of the Nur al-Shams refugee camp and of being involved in other attacks on suspected informers.

The report also states: "The Christian village of Bayt Sahur near Bethlehem was placed under curfew Friday afternoon, preventing the holding of a mass yesterday to mark the end of the 40-day mourning period for Salam Muslah, the 14-year-old killed by a settler's bullet in the kitchen of his home last month." Military sources were quoted as saying they assume that it was a preemptive measure.

The POST item continues: "Six people were wounded in the village of 'Awarta, south of Nabulus, yesterday, on the 27th day of a curfew, Palestinian sources said." It also reports that the house of an Arab who knifed a 24-year-old Bene Beraq man in Pardess Katz on Thursday was sealed up in the village of Til near Nabulus.

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 24 March in a page A3 report by Yizhar Be'er and Eytan Rabin says that the curfew on many West Bank areas continued over the weekend. Curfews were imposed on Tubas, Qabatiyah, Shuwaykah, Mashah, Dayr Ballut, Buruqin, al-Jib, Ili'r Naballah, 'Aqqabah, and the center of Hebron.

Shamir Cancels South African Housing Contract

TA2503103291 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
25 Mar 91 p 18

[Report by Yig'al Laviv]

[Text] Israel has backed away from its intended purchase of prefabricated homes in South Africa, following U.S. pressure triggered by a report in HADASHOT on 16 October 1990. Shamir pledged as much in a message to the House of Representatives conveyed by Ambassador Zalman Shoval.

The report in HADASHOT said that the Construction and Housing Ministry had issued a tender permitting the import of homes from South Africa for new immigrants. The report cited the Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying that the government decisions banning trade with South Africa do not apply to homes. The Industry and Trade Ministry spokesman was also quoted as saying that no import license is required for prefabricated homes, and that they could be imported from anywhere, including South Africa.

The report reached Ronald Dellums and Alan Wheat, the heads of the black lobby in the U.S. House of Representatives, who are waging a battle to close down the Tadiran plant in Florida over the Kur conglomerate's ties with South Africa. The two demanded that the Department of the Treasury apply to Israel the legislation outlawing trade relations with a country that maintains commercial ties with South Africa. The two simultaneously wrote to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir on 12 December, expressing their dismay over Israeli-South African ties.

The Israeli Embassy in Washington explained to senior elements in Israel the gravity Washington attaches to the issue. Consequently, on 2 January, the prime minister replied to the representatives. In his letter, Shamir announced that Israel will not import prefabricated homes from South Africa. He declared that Israel has no intention of reneging on its earlier resolutions on a freeze of all ties with South Africa and will not strike any new deal with that country.

Sharon Reviews Immigration Policy, Peace Process

TA2803123191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1105 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon this week backtracked from his resignation as chairman of the immigration cabinet. He also took political correspondents on a tour of Judaea and Samaria, showing them new construction going on there. Reporter Jack Katzenell asked him whether this was linked to U.S. efforts to boost the Israel-Arab peace process.

[Begin recording] [Sharon] We decided already many years ago, when Mr. Begin formed his first government in 1977, to build in Samaria, and Judaea, and Gaza. Our understanding is that construction here or having Jewish communities in Judaea and Samaria only contributes to peace and not to undermining peace. One may achieve peace here and move forward in the peace process if Israel will feel secure. The Jewish communities that we build increase and provide that necessary security for the people of Israel.

[Katzenell] We are now standing in Alfey Menashe. Are settlements like Alfey Menashe intended to isolate Qalqilyah and are other settlements like this to isolate Tulkarm with a view to a future political settlement?

[Sharon] The idea is not to isolate. The idea is to keep in our hands in the future—and it fits every political solution—the high controlling terrain. We are not interested in farmland. We have enough agriculture in Israel. We are interested in high terrain in the mountains, and in the road junctions, in order to keep those areas in our hands and prevent them from others. That, as I said, fits every political solution that might be. In any political solution Israel will have to keep those areas. We are now in Alfey Menashe, a few kilometers from the Mediterranean—and on a bright day here you can see Tel Aviv, Netanya, Herzliyya, Ra'anana, Kefar Saba; it is as if one is looking at the palm of your hand.

[Katzenell] You have expressed grave reservations about this plan of the government's, as proposed in May 1989. What do you think the prime minister ought to tell President Bush when he does come to Israel?

[Sharon] I believe that the prime minister will know what to tell President Bush. I am not going to give any advice here. I can tell you what I believe should be said and what I would have said is, first of all, that there is already a Palestinian state—Jordan is Palestine—and there is an existing Palestinian state. With this Palestinian state Israel should negotiate and find a way how the Arab inhabitants of Samaria, Judaea, and Gaza will be participating in elections, in political life, in this Palestinian state which exists in Jordan. I believe that for one thing that is the basic way, the only real way to arrive at a solution. Then, I believe that a very important thing—and I am sure that the prime minister will be talking about that—is the issue of weapons and arms in the Middle East. I do not see any possibility of arriving

at peace unless the arms race will be stopped. If you negotiate with a Palestinian state in Jordan you do not create a second Palestinian state or a second Palestinian identity. If the government decides to proceed along its way of autonomy or elections, however, then Israel will have to take security measures or safety measures of which I think the most important will be to annex the areas which are settled by Jews to Israel. By that you prevent the possibility of the creation of a second Palestinian state. I prefer it by far the first way—to say that there is a Palestinian state with which Israel should negotiate about many issues: political, economical, and so on.

[Katzenell] Lastly, Sir, there was a long delay in building for immigration because of all kinds of problems—[words indistinct]. Then there was a delay because of the war—in fact there was a halt because of the war. Is there a disaster in the area of building for immigration?

[Sharon] No, there is no disaster, but there is a delay. The problem now is that we do not have enough workers in construction. We urgently need about 50,000 extra workers in construction, and we do not have the workers. That is the problem at the present time, but we are making efforts, and the fact is that there is not even one family without a roof over their head, and we will resolve the problem.

[Katzenell] Why did you return to the job of head of the aliyah cabinet?

[Sharon] First of all, I managed to solve some of the problems, and I got a promise from the prime minister that the things that will be brought before the government will be dealt with in a faster way, because of their importance. Somebody should do this thing, which may be the most important thing, besides security, that we are facing now. [end recording]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0905 GMT on 23 March carries an interview with Sharon by 'Adi Talmor on the "Weekly Newsreel" program. In reply to a question on whether he might not eventually be forced to demolish the very apartments he is now building in the Golan Heights as part of a settlement with Syria. Sharon says: "I was happy to see the reaction by the Prime Minister's Office," clarifying that "construction in those areas is part of the government's policy and is no different than building in Tel Aviv. It is known that immigrants are not being sent there. Jews will live in those areas, because those areas are an integral part of Israel."]

'Arafat Says To Stop 'Terror Attacks' in Lebanon

TA2403132591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1230 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] After the Gulf war ended, Yasir 'Arafat instructed Fatah operatives in Lebanon not to carry out terror attacks on Israel. In general, this instruction has so far been observed. This was confirmed today by sources in

Israel. According to them, 'Arafat's basic working assumption has not changed in view of the Gulf war. He still maintains that political pressure on Israel should be created through the United States.

The sources said that Syria has been training terrorists for terror attacks with hang gliders. They added that the Fatah-'Arafat organization has just a few cannon in Lebanon, most of which are 155 mm. This organization has no helicopters in Lebanon, and there is no information concerning an airborne terrorist force there. This was reported by our army affairs correspondent Amir Fink.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1300 GMT on 24 March carries a similar report by army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe adding: "The sources added that last year the use of firearms in the territories and within the Green Line increased, reaching some 360 terror attacks, compared to some 120 incidents before the intifadah broke out. Also noted was a significant increase in the use of knives and firebombs.

["Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah is still the leading organization in terms of terror attacks it has committed: more than 50 percent of the overall figure. Extreme Muslim organizations are responsible for some 10 percent of terror attacks today. The Israeli sources believe that this sector will increase its activity."]

IDF's Peled Says Order 'Meaningless'

TA2503045891 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
0400 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The outgoing commander of Army Northern Command, Major General Yosi Peled, says the reports that Yasir 'Arafat has ordered Fatah units not to attack Israel from Lebanon are meaningless. Peled says the experience of the last few years shows that 'Arafat has no control over the terrorists in Lebanon. Peled stressed that, during the last year, no terrorist unit had succeeded in reaching the Israeli border—a sign of the importance and effectiveness of the south Lebanese security zone.

Peled said the three terrorists killed in the security zone yesterday in a clash with the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] probably came from a refugee camp in the Sidon area. The terrorists were on their way to carry out an attack in Israel and were heavily armed. There were no Israeli casualties in the encounter.

IDF Kills 3 'Terrorists' in South Lebanon Clash

TA2403165691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1635 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Report by army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe]

[Text] Three terrorists were killed this afternoon in a clash with an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] unit in the western sector of the security zone in south Lebanon. Our forces sustained no casualties. A combined IDF

force conducted routine activity some 2 km north of Zar'it when it identified a terrorist squad on its way to carry out a terror attack. The soldiers opened fire, killing the three terrorists. Major General Yosi Peled, commander of the Northern Command, met the soldiers on site, debriefed them, and congratulated them on a job well done.

The exchange of fire lasted a few minutes, during which the terrorists fired LAW [light antitank weapon] rockets and automatic weapons fire at the soldiers. One terrorist was killed in the first burst of fire, and the other two were killed after the IDF unit charged forward. The terrorists were found in possession of hand grenades, flak jackets, Kalashnikov rifles, and LAW launchers.

It should be stressed that in 1991 not a single terror squad has managed to reach the border fence. This squad was stopped two km north of the fence, inside the security zone.

General Lahd Comments on Future of SLA

TA2503105991 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Interview with General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army, SLA, by Salman Tawil; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Tawil] What is the future of the security region and the South Lebanese Army within the context of the possibility of peace talks and the region's return to Lebanese sovereignty?

[Lahd] We wish with all our heart that this region will again come under the sovereignty of the Lebanese Government, but with certain conditions. So far, all the press and media statements have talked about Resolution 425, but there has been no evidence that it will actually be implemented soon.

[Tawil] If all the conditions are ripe, is there a readiness to disengage from the Israeli Defense Forces [IDF] and from Israel and return the South and the security zone to Lebanese sovereignty?

[Lahd] We are a unit allied with the IDF; we are not part of the Israeli people. We are allied with the Israelis because of the joint interest shared by the SLA, the southern region, and Israel's northern region. On this basis, if this interest is satisfied, we would want to revert to Lebanese sovereignty, because we do not wish to be separated from the Lebanese state.

[Tawil] Do you have any conditions for the region's return to Lebanese sovereignty?

[Lahd] Undoubtedly, there are conditions. These will be discussed at the appropriate time.

[Tawil] What conditions, for example?

[Lahd] There is no need to mention them before the appropriate time. When negotiations are held and matters get serious, we will discuss this issue.

[Tawil] Do you share the fear of this possibility held by the population here?

[Lahd] The population is not afraid, but it is affected by statements—whether in the press or by foreign or Israeli officials—that the resolution will be implemented. They believe this will happen soon. I believe that, even if it is eventually implemented, it will take a long time.

[Tawil] The Lebanese Government has adopted a decision on disbanding the militias in Lebanon. Does this include the SLA?

[Lahd] We are not a militia. We are an army and have proved ourselves to be one. Second, the situation here is different, and we are not like other Lebanese militias. In any event, the government will be making a big mistake if it decides to disband the Lebanese militias without disbanding the armed Palestinian militias and confiscating their weapons. It will be very difficult for it to confiscate the weapons of the Lebanese militias if it does not first confiscate the weapons held by the Palestinians.

[Tawil] Are you ready to accept the Lebanese Army's entry into this region and its merger with the SLA?

[Lahd] We will discuss this issue at the appropriate time.

[Tawil] Are you satisfied with the Lebanese Army's deployment in South Lebanon and the measures it has taken there? Is the situation more stable today?

[Lahd] I am satisfied with the Lebanese Army's deployment. I have supported this all my life. I am the Army's son. I served 35 years in the Lebanese Army. I supported its deployment in the South, but as I see it, it is unable to control the situation and prevent terrorist acts. Therefore, we are forced to prevent terrorist acts by our own means.

[Tawil] Are you asking the Lebanese Army to expel all the terrorist elements from the region?

[Lahd] If the Lebanese Army cannot establish security in the region, ban gunmen, and prevent infiltrations and terrorist activities against us or against northern Israel, what good does it serve? Its existence would be meaningless. [passage omitted]

PLO Seen Anxious Over Territories Independence

TA2503093791 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 25 Mar 91 pp 1, 12

[Report by defense reporter Bradley Burston]

[Text] Tel Aviv—Following the Gulf war, Yasir 'Arafat forbade his forces in Lebanon from executing terror operations against Israel, sources here confirmed yesterday. The orders remain in effect, the sources said.

At the same time, the Palestinian leadership in the territories has become a growing threat to 'Arafat's position, the sources said, adding that the challenge may reflect a broader process of disengagement from control by PLO institutions abroad.

The sources insisted that, despite the apparent reverses in PLO policy prior to, during, and after the war, 'Arafat's basic orientation remains unchanged. He is said to be unshaken in his belief that Israeli policy can only be changed as a result of U.S. intervention.

According to the sources, there is growing anxiety in senior PLO circles that the local leadership has begun to make policy and carry out decisions independent of the Tunis-based PLO hierarchy.

Concurrently, PLO institutions worldwide are reeling from a financial crisis of unprecedented proportion. 'Arafat's outspoken support for Saddam Husayn resulted in an immediate loss of as much as 90 percent of PLO revenue, primarily from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Though Libya has stepped up its contributions, the increase has done little to offset the loss. The organization has thus been forced to curtail activities on a number of fronts, including closing embassies in several countries and limiting its representation in others.

Perhaps most troubling, however, is the loss of its central role in the distribution of funds to Palestinians in the territories. Not only have PLO contributions to needy Palestinians dropped drastically, local Palestinians have begun to build their own fund-raising apparatus, skirting longstanding PLO institutions.

Accompanying 'Arafat's financial woes are such personal challenges as the loss of European support for his leadership even in Italy, long considered a stronghold of 'Arafat support.

The ultimate danger foreseen by PLO leaders abroad, the sources said, is the possibility of the disengagement of the territories from the foreign-based PLO.

The independence and growing strength of territories PLO leaders was demonstrated in discussions prior to the recent visit by Secretary of State James Baker. PLO leaders in Tunis initially opposed a Baker meeting with local Palestinians, but were forced to give in to the arguments of figures in the territories.

Later meetings with the European "troika" and planned future talks with visiting diplomats have cemented the impression that the territories' leaders are taking increasingly independent of the central hierarchy. [sentence as published] Nonetheless, the sources continued, a leader has yet to emerge within the PLO to offer a serious challenge to Arafat's position.

For the present, 'Arafat's strategy is to attempt to shore up relations with the USSR, Europe, and particularly with Syria, which recently released hundreds of PLO troops arrested in Lebanon.

Despite 'Arafat's orders to refrain from attacking Israel, in part an effort to allow resumption of U.S. contacts, PLO troop strength in Lebanon is growing. According to the sources there are now 11,000 Palestinian fighters in Lebanon, of whom some 5,000 belong to 'Arafat's Fatah.

Both Syria and Iran are continuing to lend support to Palestinian terrorists, the sources said, noting that agents are operating throughout Europe in efforts to purchase hang gliders, para-sails and other equipment adaptable to border crossings.

[In a similar report on Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 0400 GMT on 25 March, reporter Jack Katzenell cites "Israeli experts" as saying that "the Iranians are quietly working to increase their influence in the spread of the Islamic revolution in the Middle East and around the world. They are not confining financial or other aid to Muslim religious extremists only. Palestinian organizations, such as Ahmad Jibril's Progressive Front for the Liberation of Palestine, are also benefiting from Iranian sponsorship. In Lebanon, Amal as well as Hizballah is now being courted by the Iranians."]

The sources also noted that there has been a steady rise in the use of firearms and explosives since the outbreak of the intifada, reaching a total of 360 incidents last year.

Although fundamentalist groups accounted for a small percentage of the overall incidents of intifada-related violence, their followers have been implicated in approximately 60 percent of the knifings in recent months.

U.S. Planning Regional Peace Meeting in Cairo

T42503083691 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
25 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by Tzvi Gilat]

[Text] The "event" the Americans plan as the next stage in promoting the peace process is a regional meeting in Cairo in the summer. This emerges from assessments and reports that have reached Jerusalem over the past few days.

The participants in that event will be the eight members of the pro-American coalition (the six Gulf countries plus Egypt and Syria). An Israeli delegation and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will also be invited. The conference will constitute the starting point for the framework of negotiations on Arab-Israeli peace talks and on the solution of the Palestinian problem. Contacts between Jordan and the United States have already been accelerated in a bid to get Jordan back in the political scene.

The Palestinian element in the delegation will be based on the group of people who met with James Baker in Jerusalem. It is believed that just as the Unified National Command of the Uprising forced the PLO in Tunis to let

its members meet with Baker, it will again coerce the PLO into sanctioning the delegation's participation in the conference.

Whether the initiative is American or Egyptian is not known, but it seems that they both support it. An attempt may be made in the near future to elicit mutual gestures from the regional countries in order to create a climate conducive to the conference. The reason for rescheduling Bush's visit for the summer is that the region will then be better prepared for a more dramatic move.

It should be emphasized that at this stage the idea is merely being explored. Israel has not yet been asked to react to it.

According to the new idea, the Palestinian delegation will find itself within the framework of a Jordanian delegation, thereby obviating the need for a close scrutiny of its representatives. Furthermore, by this summer it will be made clear that that delegation is not a PLO delegation, but one which represents the residents of the territories who are affiliated [qeshurim] with Jordan.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 25 March, in a similar report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer on page 4, says that the Palestinian delegation will be "under U.S.-Soviet sponsorship."]

Egyptian Envoy on Peace, Palestinian Problem

TA2203113691 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR (HOTAM supplement) in Hebrew 22 Mar 91 pp 6, 7

[Interview with Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni by Pinhas 'Inbari; place and date not given]

[Text] ['Inbari] What does Egypt think about "the new world order," and what does it hope to achieve when it materializes?

[Basyuni] There is now a golden opportunity to reach comprehensive peace and stability in our region, and it is very important for us to live in peace and stability and enjoy prosperity. Having played such a vital role in the Kuwait crisis, the international community must now play the same role to solve the Arab-Israeli problem from every angle, including the Palestinian problem, which lies at the heart of the Arab-Israeli problem.

What do the Arab countries want now? They want a comprehensive peace, but would like to reach talks under an umbrella. There are all sorts of umbrellas—an international conference with the five permanent members of the Security Council; an international conference with the two major superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union; or any other type of umbrella we could agree upon and under which we could sit and talk.

A second convention of the Geneva conference, which Israel had previously accepted, is another possibility. Israel participated in the first conference in 1973 during Golda Meir's government. Even Mr. Begin said in the

Knesset in October 1977, when he presented his cabinet, that he is committed to participating in a second Geneva conference. That model will also do as an umbrella.

Why do I need the umbrella and why not direct talks? My answer is: Let there be direct talks as well! But I also need the umbrella for three reasons: first, to encourage the parties to participate, as the participation of the USSR will prompt the Syrians, Lebanese, Palestinians, and Jordanians to take part in them as well. Second, so that if the parties reach a deadlock, that body, which will be an international body of some sort, will be able to advise, though not force solutions. I am not talking about any type of coercion; the solution must be just, because I want a lasting peace. The international body is necessary to advise, and extricate the talks from a possible bog. Remember Camp David and the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement: If it were not for U.S. counsel, Israel and Egypt would not have attained peace. The United States can advise—not coerce—to help us reach a breakthrough from the stalemate. The third reason is that if the parties reach a settlement, who will provide the guarantees? That will be the international community, through an international body. Yet let me emphasize that the bilateral talks themselves will be direct.

['Inbari] Let me unearth some old concepts and examine their validity: the international conference, a joint Jordanian-PLO delegation, the Baker plan, and a Palestinian delegation. Are they still feasible?

[Basyuni] First of all it is necessary to agree on some framework of an international umbrella and an opening convention—an "event" of some sort. This will be followed by a stage of direct talks in committees, such as Israeli-Syrian, Israeli-Lebanese, Israeli-Palestinian, or Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian delegations. We will talk and reach agreements. During the direct talks we will discuss the Palestinian delegation, the Palestinian representation. Here I would like to say frankly that it is immaterial with whom we talk. What is more important is what the interlocutor will say, whether he will be able to reach agreements, and whether he will actually be able to execute the agreement you reach with him.

['Inbari] The PLO?

[Basyuni] I am not talking about it. The Palestinians have the right to select their representation. It is not my business. Egypt's strategy, now and in the future, is the strategy of peace. We are ready to take all the steps to attain peace. There can be a Palestinian delegation, or a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The really important thing is to get things moving, and what such a delegation will say.

Let us say a delegation from the territories comes. Are you sure that delegation will be authorized to reach a compromise, or have the power to deliver the goods and carry out the agreements? This is what you should ask yourself. Why are we wasting our time on this or another delegation? We need a delegation with authority and the ability to deliver the goods.

[Inbari] With authority from whom? From the PLO or from the Arab countries?

[Basyuni] How can the Palestinian problem be solved without the Palestinians themselves? The Palestinians have every right to elect their representation. Will you allow Hapo'el Tel Aviv sportsmen on the Maccabi Tel Aviv team? Let the Palestinians elect their representation, so long as it has authority, they can deliver the goods, and implement agreements.

[Inbari] We have heard a lot of protest against 'Arafat in Cairo. What is Egypt's official stand on 'Arafat?

[Basyuni] These are not official comments. Egypt's formal position is very clear: Palestinian representation is a matter for the Palestinians, who have the right to decide who will stand for them. I want to solve the Palestinian problem but do not want to solve the problem of Palestinian representation. That they must solve on their own. If they want someone, let them elect him; if they do not want someone, let them elect whoever they want. The important thing, from my viewpoint, is to accept peace and put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its manifestations.

[Inbari] There is an old Egyptian idea of establishing a Palestinian government-in-exile in Cairo. How viable is it?

[Basyuni] Again, I think it is the Palestinians' problem. I do not know what the Palestinians themselves want to do about it.

[Inbari] What is your attitude toward the Palestinians "at home?" Would you like to see them having a greater weight in the Palestinian equation compared with their brethren "abroad?" What would you like to tell them?

[Basyuni] (Angrily) What can you expect of the Palestinians in the territories if you do not offer them anything? You are offering them an empty plate, and are telling them: Come and eat! You are not offering them anything. All the time you say: Not an inch! Not this part and not that part; not the Golan! Not territory for peace! Nothing!!! Who will come and talk to you when you present all these preconditions and at the same time contend that you are against preconditions?! When you say not an inch, and now we have heard that it includes the Golan as well, who will come to talk to you with these terms? Before you present an initiative, you must first ask yourself whether you will find partners for it. What you present is impossible, impossible, impossible. (More and more excitedly) If you truly want peace, how can you find partners if already now you say you will not give back the Golan Heights? How can you expect Hafiz al-Asad to come to talk to you? Only to salute you and give you the Golan Heights?! At least, do not present preconditions!

This is unbelievable! You close all the doors by such declarations! Believe me, you kill all the hopes for the future. You are a democratic country, and it is none of

my business what you decide; you can decide what you want, but I can assure you that this way you will not find interlocutors for negotiations and will not get peace! It is impossible, impossible, impossible.

[Inbari] They talk now about confidence-building measures. We know what Israel wants from the Arabs: ending hostilities, lifting the Arab boycott, and the like. We have not heard what the Arabs want from Israel.

[Basyuni] Who conquered whom? Am I occupying your land or are you occupying mine? I cannot believe who is seeking confidence-building steps! Still, I say: fine, but this should come from both sides! And simultaneously.

[Inbari] Nevertheless, what do the Arabs want?

[Basyuni] (Very heatedly) First, stop the harmful declarations. Then, stop building settlements. How can you have real peace if you build settlements? Are you serious? You take steps to expand the settlements and increase the number of settlers. Still, I say: All right, there will be confidence-building moves, but they must be reciprocal and simultaneous. It should be remembered that you are the occupiers, not I. You must adopt confidence-building measures, treat the Palestinians nicely, grant them freedom of movement and liberty to express their views. But you twist everything around, demanding confidence-building gestures from me. These steps will be taken in the course of the talks. You can say whatever you want. You will then discover that we are very sincere. We want peace. We want to live in peace, security, and prosperity. I say this openly. We are very honest, our strategy is the strategy of peace. You must also adopt confidence-building measures.

[Inbari] Would it be correct to gather that concrete contacts have already been launched and that currently Israel is demanding confidence-building steps before the talks, while you maintain that they will come only after the talks begin?

[Basyuni] This surprises me. After all, Israel demanded talks with the Arab countries. Now this is beginning to materialize, and you present preconditions? You said you wanted to discuss the Palestinian problem in parallel with talks with the Arab countries. We agreed, and now we hear that you want to talk (only) to the Arab countries and have forgotten the Palestinian problem. What is this?! Each time you present something, we consent, and then you add further conditions.

Go back to the negotiations, and you will find out that you have real partners who truly want to attain peace and to have a just peace to live in with you. I am not only talking about the Palestinians' legitimate rights, but also about the Israeli people's—men and women—legitimate right to live peacefully and securely. You are fully justified in wanting that, but please listen to the other side, too. Live and let others live as well. This way things cannot go on. You always say what you want, but the problem is that you ignore the minimum the other side requires and all the time append further conditions.

[Inbari] Can I deduce from this that in the concrete contacts, which may have already begun, there are real problems between Israel and Egypt?

[Basyuni] It is not a matter of pressure. I want the Israeli people to realize that peace is very important for them, possibly more so than for the Arabs. I want to promise them that the only thing that can guarantee security for the Israelis is peace. A strong army is important, but it alone cannot guarantee security. There can be no security without peace. I want to see the Israelis living in peace. This is my dream. I also want to see the Palestinians being granted their legitimate right to live together peacefully and amicably. I tell you this because I am sincere. I want to see a comprehensive peace—and kindly take my remarks from the positive, not negative, point of view.

I have devoted my life to attaining a comprehensive peace. Do not look at my remarks for anything that would imply that I want to do something bad. I want to see Israel living in peace with the 21 Arab countries.

[Inbari] We have known you, Mr. Ambassador, for many years and really appreciate your efforts for peace. But we would like to understand, in specific terms, where we are right now.

[Basyuni] In concrete terms, let me say that we have a golden opportunity. It is a dream!!! You have Arab partners who want to attain a just peace. But do not say: the Golan Heights—no!!! Give the nations hope. Let the Palestinians have hope. Do not say: without preconditions, and then rush to do exactly that yourselves! This way your sincerity raises doubts. Without territory for peace, both on the Golan as well as in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, not only in the Sinai. [sentence as published]

Resolution 242 was adopted after the 1967 war, and it applies to all fronts: the Sinai, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians. Everyone understands it that way. If you do not want peace, that is your business. You are a democratic nation, but if you ask me, I will answer you, in concrete terms, that 242 implies territory for peace on all the fronts; Resolution 338 means negotiations under appropriate international supervision. If you ask me how we should start, I will say: Accept these principles, and after that I will be prepared to solve the problems in stages. But the stages must be interlocked [previous word in English].

How can we be sure that Israel will be ready to discuss the solution of the final stage and reach an agreement about it with us? Maybe Israel will say that it agrees to a timetable. Then I will start with autonomy in an interim agreement, and after three or five years I will agree that it is time to discuss the comprehensive arrangement, with a fixed and interlocked timetable. How can the Arabs be sure that we will attain results? We spent three years over the autonomy talks without making the slightest progress. How can the Arabs be sure that this will not be repeated? Even now there are people [in

Israel] who say that there is no intention whatsoever of reaching the final stage. I am prepared to accept the principle of stages, as well as the interim stage for between three and five years, but we want to be assured that we will reach the final stage.

[Inbari] Israel is so distrusted?

[Basyuni] I do not wish to meddle in Israeli affairs. Israel has the right to express every opinion. But some people in Israel have been saying that the final stage must not be reached and that autonomy—according to Israel's interpretation—is the last stop. This is a problem which, once overcome, will bring us very close to a solution.

[Inbari] There has been much talk about demilitarizing the Middle East. What is Egypt's position, and are there differences of opinion with Israel? It seems that in this Israel, more than anyone else, will be asked to foot the bill, because it will have to cede the nuclear option.

[Basyuni] If there is peace, it will not need these sophisticated, expensive weapons. We will be able to discuss conventional and nonconventional weapons during the talks. This will occur as soon as the talks start, and then we will launch a new era of stability and security. After peace is attained, the economy will feature as the focal point of our efforts, and we will think about ways to invest in the economy, not in conventional or nonconventional weapons.

[Inbari] Will you accept Israel's demand that the nuclear option be discussed after discussions about conventional weapons?

[Basyuni] No. This is Israel's position. Our position is that we will discuss everything at once, conventional and nonconventional weapons alike simultaneously, because it will be easier if we start discussing this in an atmosphere of trust and launch peace in an atmosphere of trust. After all, no one will need weapons that cost a fortune and use up money which you need to develop your land. You must be assured that no one will attack you. Israel says the deliberations should start with talks about conventional weapons, while we say: all the types of weapons right away.

[Inbari] Could you sum up the points of agreement, and the points of disagreement, between Israel and Egypt?

[Basyuni] We are very close. There are things over which we agree, and others over which we differ. There is the issue of the umbrella. Israel—including a Likud government, back in 1977—accepted the Geneva conference. One session was already held, and we can have the second. Another matter is the Palestinian representation. The important thing is to find the gentleman who could also make good on the agreements he reaches with you. I need the link between the interim agreement and the final agreement. Otherwise, how can I be sure that you will come to serious talks on the final stage? When you sign, you honor your signature. We do not doubt that, but we want to guarantee the final stage.

You require confidence-building measures, and I say this should be mutual. Your steps should be aimed at the Palestinians. I am prepared to have simultaneous (two-track) discussions with the Palestinian problem [as published] and the Arab countries, but there must be a linkage. If you want to begin to have talks with the Arabs about the final solution you must discuss the final solution of the Palestinian issue. Let there be a final date for the simultaneous completion of the talks. You wanted these talks to be simultaneous; I am prepared to

accept that, but they will not be one-sided. Not over only one issue. I am talking not only about the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, but also about the legitimate right of the Israelis—men, women, and children—for security and peace. This is a reasonable stance. You are talking to a man who dedicated his life to peace; one who talks to you from the bottom of his heart.

[Inbari] Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

King Husayn Receives Tariq 'Aziz, Saddam Message

NC2303192191 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
1900 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz at al-Nadwah Palace tonight. Tariq 'Aziz conveyed to his majesty an oral message from His Excellency President Saddam Husayn. The message deals with the situation in brotherly Iraq, as well as the phase of construction which the Iraqi people are engaged in to repair the damage caused by the war.

Developments on the international scene were also discussed. The Jordanian prime minister; his excellency the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; the information minister, who is also the acting foreign minister; and the Iraqi ambassador to Amman attended the meeting.

'Aziz Departs; Meeting Reviewed

NC2403130691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1200 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz has concluded a brief visit to Jordan, during which he conveyed an oral message to King Husayn from President Saddam Husayn. The message deals with the reconstruction process in Iraq in the wake of the destruction brought about by the Gulf war. An official Jordanian source said the message also deals with new international developments and regional developments.

This high-level Iraqi-Jordanian contact, which is the first since the end of the Gulf fighting, precedes King Husayn's talks with French President Mitterrand scheduled to take place in Paris next Friday.

An Iraqi source told our station that 'Aziz conveyed to King Husayn the steps which the Iraqi leadership will follow after the formation of the new cabinet. These steps include studying and preparing the Iraqi constitution. This step will be followed by a phase that will include the formation of political parties and a general referendum before a new government is formed.

The same source added that 'Aziz affirmed the Iraqi authorities' success in ending the rebellion in southern Iraq. The source noted that the situation in the north would return to normal in the near future. He said that these types of events have occurred many times in the past, only to be abandoned when political issues changed.

Paper Discusses New Iraqi Cabinet Formation

JN2403101491 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
24 Mar 91 pp 1, 5

["By Lamis Andoni, Jordan Times Staff Reporter. The writer has just returned from a several-week stay in Iraq to cover the war and its aftermath"]

[Text] The formation of a new Iraqi cabinet on Saturday, headed as expected by Dr Sa'dun Hammadi, is apparently meant to be the first step towards power-sharing within the Iraqi political system as a prelude to democratisation.

The new cabinet has to carry out the three difficult tasks of quelling the armed rebellion, reconstructing the war-devastated country but, most significantly, restoring the people's faith in the regime.

Iraqi officials admit that restoring the credibility of the leadership is crucial to the survival of the system and say that they are aware that each official step is received with scepticism by ordinary Iraqis.

In post-war Iraq, many people do not even care to show their scepticism—whether by voicing doubts or by maintaining total silence. On the day following President Saddam Husayn's speech promising democracy, reporters who were still in Baghdad found it very difficult to get people even to talk about reforms and the president's pledge.

In the traditional al-Shurjah souk as well as the middle class al-Karradah area, several Iraqis claimed they had not heard or read the speech. It was a sign of scepticism rather than a statement of fact.

A tour around Baghdad on the evening before President Saddam delivered the speech showed that people were glued to their portable radios and television sets—in areas where electricity was restored.

In some neighbourhoods people gathered in street side cafes—which use mobile power generators—to watch the speech on television. People looked very attentive but cautious.

Those who were ready to talk the next day said the same thing: They welcomed the decision but the leadership has still to back its words with deeds.

Some said that they had heard such promises before and that they would wait and see.

But the people's reaction was obviously influenced by another factor other than scepticism. According to Iraqis themselves, their immediate concern is on how to resume their normal life. The wide devastation and destruction that the intensive bombardment by the allied forces has caused also left behind a deep sense of helplessness and despair.

"It is unfair to expect people to reflect on each word and think rationally when they realise the scope of devastation that was left behind. You have to give people time," one Iraqi analyst said.

But Iraqi officials and analysts admit that the Iraqi people's attitude also reflects the shaken credibility of the regime.

Judging by the debate that preceded the formation of the new cabinet, even some Ba'thist officials believed that the appointment of efficient technocrats—rather than merely conformist party members—to ministerial posts and a complete change of the information policy were key to any credible transformation process.

The structure of the new cabinet—which seems to include many unknown technocrats—and the dismissal of Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim indicate that the reassessment has practically started.

Mr. Jasim, who held his portfolio for more than 10 years, is widely blamed—inside official circles and by the public—for the failure of Iraq's information policy.

Although Baghdad was repeatedly criticised for its approach to the international media, the real problem, according to Iraqi analysts, is that the Iraqi media had lost credibility inside the country and with its own people.

Hamid Sa'id, editor-in-chief of the Ba'thist Party's *Al-Thawrah* daily was the first to speak out against the performance of the Iraqi media in an article published in the newspaper two weeks ago. Sa'id implied that the Iraqi media and press misled and disinformed the public, and he called for professional and objective journalism in Iraq.

The lack of the credibility of the Iraqi media is viewed by some officials and analysts to seriously obstruct the reconstruction of the country and efforts to maintain national unity.

"How can we reach out for the people if the media has no credibility," asked one Ba'thist official.

The Iraqi media was mainly criticised for its excessive rhetoric and virtual blackout on some crucial events. For example the media and press maintained total silence for a long time concerning the unrest in the south. As a result, Iraqis were listening to mainly Western radio stations which were carrying the opposition's and the Iranian version of the story.

"Our people are vulnerable to hostile radio stations. This is extremely dangerous in a situation where people could be given to despair by the vast destruction of the country and the psychological warfare that is waged against Iraq," the party official noted.

In his speech last week, President Saddam pledged to allow freedom of the press as part of a comprehensive democratisation process.

Officials said later that Baghdad would adopt a new and open information policy which would also include a shift in attitude towards the international media.

They predicted then that Mr. Jasim would not remain in his post despite his historic and close friendship with President Saddam.

But the Iraqi media's failure was not the only shortcoming exposed by the military defeat. Many in Baghdad are critical and have lost faith in the many supposedly popular organisations that were part of the vast apparatus of the Ba'thist Party.

From the very first day of the war, there was no visible or tangible role for the party's organisations, which, in theory, aimed at maintaining a link between the leadership and the people. Many Iraqis concluded that these organisations—those of women, youth, students and trade unions—were paralysed by bureaucracy and lack of initiative. The result, according to one Ba'thist activist, was an increase in the feeling of alienation from wide sectors of the public.

These realisations, analysts conclude, are expected to lead to a thorough reassessment of the role of the Ba'thist Party in the government—if the system survives.

Says Cabinet 'Positive Result' of War

JN2403103791 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
24 Mar 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Changes Come With Shocks"]

[Text] The formation of a new Iraqi government Saturday and the talk in the Iraqi media of a new era in the country's political life are very encouraging signs. If anything, it is a positive result of the Gulf war. It certainly is a reflection of the inevitable belief in many Arab quarters that democracy and political pluralism are the best medicines for ailing Arab societies and Arab Order. This democratic trend that for many months now swept through North African Arab states, Jordan, Yemen and now into Kuwait and Iraq is certainly a promising phenomenon that in the grim reality of destruction offers new hope for the peoples of the region.

A democratic Iraq run on a constitutional republic and a multi-national, ethnic and religious pluralism could serve as a model for the other regimes in the region. This is not to say that the task of transferring an authoritarian regime into a democratic one, either in Iraq or elsewhere in the Gulf, is an easy one. A great deal of confidence building among the different groups and factions of the society is a must. Enmity, disgruntlement and the sense of injustice among Iraq's ethnic and religious factions are immense. The task confronting the Iraqi leadership is a forbidding one. Some might argue that the move is not genuine and only rhetorical. That might be true. Deeds, however, will determine the outcome. The shock that struck Iraq and its leadership was a tremendous one. It is shocks like this one that bring about profound change. The Iraqi leadership must have realised that its military defeat, and the causes for that, were brought about by a narrow segment of an elite leadership without public and grassroots input.

The Iraqis had indeed started talking about democracy and pluralism right after the end of Iran-Iraq war. The Iraqi leadership was talking about a new constitution as

recently as last May. And last month there were newsreports that the Iraqi president had invited exiled Iraqi opposition to share power in post-war Iraq. It is now left to the Iraqi Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds, Turks and the opposition at large to take the opportunity and heed the call for democracy. They must all realise that foreign powers lending support for Iraqi factions are least interested in Iraqi stability. And the Iraqi people, coming out of a devastating war, cannot endure for long the bickering and infighting between different factions vying for power. The peaceful road to power has been inaugurated, everyone is invited to participate in cementing it.

Party Urges Establishing Federation With Iraq

NC2303122191 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
23 Mar 91 p 16

[Text] Amman—The Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party—the Unified Organization and the Democratic Unionist Alliance have called for continuing the official and popular efforts to extend every assistance to the fraternal Iraqi people, to secure the lifting of the siege against Iraq, and to prevent interference in Iraq's internal affairs.

In its weekly statement, the party [as published] called for the creation of an Iraqi government representing all sectors of the Iraqi people, including the military, the various sects, the national parties, and all social forces, and for parliamentary elections to be held on the basis of political pluralism and competition.

The statement also urged the formulation of a plan for full unity between Jordan and Iraq on the lines of a federation that would respect each side's sovereignty and establish federal and regional parliamentary councils. Any Arab country would be welcome to join such a federation on this basis.

In its statement, the party asserted that the government's decision to attend the meeting of the Arab League Ministerial Council is in keeping with Jordan's moderate policy and respect for international legitimacy on the one hand, and its support for all efforts to secure a pan-Arab renaissance throughout the Arab homeland on the other. This has been Jordan's unchanging position despite all sacrifices and pressures.

Senator, Deputies React to U.S. Aid Suspension

NC2203124491 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
22 Mar 91 pp 16, 12

[By Dina Zurba]

[Text] Amman—Commenting on the U.S. decision to suspend financial aid to Jordan, Dr. Khalil al-Salim, rapporteur of the Senate Finance Committee, stated: "The decision came as a surprise and lacks any justification. Jordan has abided by the UN resolutions since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis."

Regarding the U.S. Congress decision to link the issue of aid to that of peace in the Middle East, Dr. al-Salim said

that His Majesty King Husayn preceded U.S. President George Bush in launching a peace initiative based on exchanging land for peace, which was rejected by Israel.

Dr. al-Salim added that it would have been better for the U.S. Congress to suspend aid to Israel until it responded to the peace efforts. He said that the U.S. desire for peace appears rather insincere because it is punishing Jordan, which is moving toward peace, while it awards billions of dollars to Israel to enable it to take a negative stand on the solution to the region's problems.

Questioned by AFP about the suspension of U.S. aid to Jordan, the office of the Islamic Movement deputies [at the House of Representatives] in Amman issued a statement which noted that the United States had threatened to suspend aid to Jordan since the Gulf crisis began. Thus the U.S. congressional decision, which was supported by the Democratic majority known for its strong ties to the Jewish state, came as no surprise to the Islamic Movement deputies. The statement added: The United States only extends aid to Islamic countries to further its aims and Jewish goals. As we condemn the policy of bribery pursued by the United States in dealing with world governments and peoples, we stress the need for Islamic peoples to rely on their own resources, which are abundant, may God be praised. We also stress the need for a just distribution of wealth to these peoples.

As U.S. aid has always come with strings attached and is intended to restrict the nation's decisionmaking and freedom and to undermine its independence and dignity, the Islamic Movement deputies strongly believe that it is time for our Jordanian people to rely on themselves and to be content with the little they have because the road to strength begins with self-reliance and applying the principle: "Let us eat what we grow and let us wear what we weave."

Radio Reports U.S. Congress 'Compromise' on Aid

NC2203204891 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
1900 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] In the wake of the U.S. Administration's objection to the U.S. Senate decision to suspend U.S. economic and military assistance to Jordan in the amount of \$57 million and the U.S. President's threat to veto the decision, negotiators from the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives agreed on a draft resolution, termed a compromise solution, to mitigate the ban barring U.S. aid to Jordan.

The draft resolution stipulates that the U.S. President can proceed with plans to provide Jordan with \$20 million in military aid and \$35 million in economic assistance if he informs the Congress in writing that such a thing will bolster Middle East peace efforts. The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives will vote on a bill on the Gulf war costs and on another one related to aid to foreign countries, including Jordan.

Amman To Receive Over \$50 Million in Aid, Loans

NC2303170791 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic
1520 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, 23 Mar (PETRA)—The World Bank has agreed to lend Jordan \$10 million as part of an emergency loan to restore the Jordanian economy, which was harmed by the Gulf crisis.

Planning Minister Dr. Khalid Amin 'Abdallah said that Jordan had earlier submitted a report on the economic effects created in Jordan as a result of the return of thousands of Jordanians from the Gulf region and on their requirements for services, especially those related to basic needs such as food commodities, health, education, housing, transportation, and water, the costs of which were estimated at around \$235 million.

The minister added: As a result of Jordan's negotiations, it has been agreed to secure the amount of \$53.6 million to be granted to Jordan in the form of loans and urgent aid. He indicated that the World Bank's loan falls within this context.

The minister went on to say: Switzerland has promised to give Jordan a \$25 million grant. Likewise, Sweden promised to provide Jordan with 10 million [currency indistinct], whereas Canada has promised to give Jordan \$7.3 million. With regard to Luxembourg, it promised to give Jordan \$1.3 million. The planning minister pointed out that bilateral agreements will shortly be signed between Jordan and the countries providing these grants and loans.

House Speaker Requests Extraordinary Session

JN2403113091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
24 Mar 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat Saturday sent a request to His Majesty King Husayn to approve the convening of the Parliament for an extraordinary session to discuss a number of draft laws referred to the House by the government.

'Arabiyat said that the House planned to debate national strategies related to water, agriculture, public freedoms and the general political situation in the Arab area.

On March 16, a Royal decree was issued ending the current session of the Lower House of Parliament in accordance with article 78 of the Jordanian Constitution.

According to the Constitution, the next ordinary session is due in October. However, another Royal decree could convene Parliament in an extraordinary session to discuss specified issues.

The Royal decree was read out in Parliament which last Saturday held its last meeting.

In the ordinary session, which started in October, the Lower House held 33 sessions tackling a number of issues, dominated by the Gulf crisis and the subsequent war in the Gulf.

Ship Reportedly Intercepted by U.S.-Led Forces

JN2503100391 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
25 Mar 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—A cargo vessel laden with goods imported from northern Europe has been intercepted by the naval forces of the U.S.-led alliance while on its way to the port of al-'Aqabah and turned away back, according to an official for the Jordan National Shipping Lines.

He said that the vessel was heading from north Europe towards al-'Aqabah carrying containers with goods imported by Jordanian merchants when it was intercepted for inspection. He said that when inspection could not be done on board, the vessel was ordered to head for Suez in Egypt for proper inspection of the containers.

The incident, which occurred Friday, March 22, was the latest in a series of incidents in which vessels with Jordan-bound cargo were turned back and forced to dump their shipments at Jeddah, in Saudi Arabia, or Egyptian ports where a great deal of the goods were either stolen or sold in auction without their owners' knowledge.

According to the Shipping Agents Association (SAA) in Jordan, the interception of ships is still being conducted by navy vessels from the United States, France, Spain and Greece.

SAA President Tawfiq Qa'war told the Jordan Times recently that some of the containers on board vessels are normally shipped at the bottom of the hold making it impossible to be opened and the contents checked unless taken overboard for inspection.

Many vessels with Jordan-bound goods stopped coming to al-'Aqabah Port since the start of the hostilities in the Gulf region.

Release of Foreign Hostages Expected 'Next Week'

NC2403070691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
0615 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Sources familiar with current negotiations on the release of foreign hostages in Lebanon expect some of these hostages to be released next week, unless new delaying factors emerge. Many foreign correspondents were observed to arrive in Beirut the last half of this week to cover the development.

Amal: Release Depends on Israel

NC2403152891 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Islamic Amal Movement leader Husayn al-Musawi has said that his organization is as eager as Syria and Iran to release the foreign hostages, but this must be in return for the release of prisoners detained in Israel.

Al-Musawi said the Israeli offer to free Arab prisoners requires a dialogue between his group and Israel, which is impossible. What is needed, he added, is a means of communication.

Al-Musawi Unaware of 'Imminent' Release

NC2503071691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 1630 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Husayn al-Musawi has emphasized that he is unaware of the imminent release of hostages being held in Lebanon. He denied that a Hizballah delegation discussed the subject during a just-concluded visit to Tehran. Al-Musawi indicated that Iran and Syria want to see the hostages released. He pointed out that in addition to the American hostages, there are Muslim and nationalist hostages, and so an overall solution must be sought. Al-Musawi noted that Western intelligence services now acknowledge that Hizballah has nothing to do with the hostage-taking.

Scholars Group Condemns Al-Khu'i 'Abduction'

NC2303110291 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 0830 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The Islamic scholars grouping has condemned the abduction of Grand Ayatollah Abu-al-Qasim al-Khu'i and several other honored scholars. The grouping said in a statement that Saddam's abduction and detention of al-Khu'i enrages all Muslims and free men around the world.

The statement expressed the grouping's belief that the Iraqi tyrant's crime of abducting al-Khu'i is the last gasp of a dying man and that his oppression and terrorism will now escape his fate. The statement called on Arab and Muslim governments and on all humanitarian organizations to declare their solidarity with the Iraqi people and their Islamic leaders in al-Najaf.

Muslims March To Protest Al-Khu'i 'Arrest'

LD2203201791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Lebanese Muslims staged widespread marches in support of the uprising of the Muslim people of Iraq and condemnation of the arrest of His Eminence Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i by Saddam's regime. Our colleague has sent this report from Beirut to which I draw your attention.

[Begin correspondent recording] [words indistinct] revolutionary Hizballah and the Lebanese Amal Movement, two glorious marches were held this afternoon in southern and western suburbs of Beirut in support of the uprising of the Muslim people of Iraq and in condemnation of the arrest of His Eminence Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i and several other of the honorable al-Najaf 'ulema by Saddam's regime.

The participants, chanting down with the Iraqi dictator and down with the Ba'th Party, called for the continuation of the uprising of the people of Iraq and the immediate release of al-Khu'i and his companions from the Iraqi regime's jails. Meanwhile the Friday prayer imams in their sermons, which were staged in all the Sunni and Shiite areas in Lebanon condemned the latest crimes of the Ba'thist regime of Iraq, and the affront against the sacred status of the Islamic clergy. They questioned the silence of the western governments and international organizations vis-a-vis Saddam's cruel measures and the slaughter of the Iraqi people by the ruling regime of that country, calling on Muslims for a widespread move to topple the dictatorial and idolatrous regime of Iraq.

Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, the prominent Lebanese cleric, in his Friday sermons today, held at the Imam Riza—peace be upon him—Mosque in a southern Beirut suburb, said that the arrest of al-Khu'i and his companions' has proved more than ever the nature of the Iraqi regime as the assassin of the ulema and the executioner of the Muslim people of Iraq. Allamah Fadlallah, continuing his sermon stressed: The United States is satisfied with the extermination of the movement of Iraqi Muslims by Saddam, especially the onslaught of the Iraqi Army against the holy cities of Karbala' and al-Najaf, because these acts are compatible with U.S. objectives in suppressing the Islamic movement in Iraq.

On the other hand, Shaykh Sa'id Sha'ban, the leader of the Lebanese Islamic Tawhid [unification; or monotheism] Movement also, in his remarks in the Friday prayers in Tripoli in northern Lebanon, condemned the crimes of the Ba'thist regime of Iraq against the Muslim ulema and people of that country. he said: Saddam's regime has completely surrendered to the conditions and demands of the United States and implements U.S. wishes in suppressing and exterminating the Islamic movement in Iraq.

Shaykh Mahir Hamud, a member of the Lebanese Muslim Ulema Forum, in the Friday prayer sermons in Sidon, in southern Lebanon said: The arrest of al-Khu'i and the shelling of the Islamic sanctities in Karbala' and al-Najaf is an anti-human and anti-God action, and the extent of dangers threatening the Islamic ummah emanating from this is immense. Therefore, Muslims must struggle for the overthrow of the ruling government in Baghdad. [end recording]

Fadlallah Urges Army, Resistance Cooperation

NC2303085991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Yesterday evening Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah met with Walid Junblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party; Durayd Yaghi, Junblatt's deputy for foreign affairs; and Akram al-Shihayyib, a member of the political bureau. The meeting centered around current Lebanese developments.

His eminence affirmed that the resistance cannot end as long as Israel controls the border strip area. This comment is an indirect response to President Ilyas al-Hirawi's declaration that the time for militias and resistance groups has ended.

His eminence added that the resistance could stop if the army itself takes over the process, but we all know that a politicized army cannot do this and that the claim that the South can be liberated politically is wrong. Politics cannot liberate the South from Israel because Israel uses the South Lebanese Army as an Israeli army in Lebanon to protect it.

The scholar Fadlallah pointed out that the resolutions being implemented are from the United States, not from the united Arab states. Israel continues to cling to the 17th May agreement with Lebanon. There are many things Israel will not allow to happen in the south. Therefore, his eminence added, the resistance is the only way to liberate the south. The duty of the emergency forces in the south is to prevent action against Israel and cool down the situation, although the occupation forces are preventing the emergency forces from performing their duty.

The scholar Fadlallah stressed that one cannot depend on the United States to implement international political resolutions since it is dealing with both the government and the opposition. One cannot rely on the United States. We call for cooperation between the army and the resistance and coordination between them to confront Israel.

Government Officials Said Assassination Targets

NC2303191091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Security authorities have disclosed information about a wide-scale plan to assassinate a number of government and political figures, including Defense Minister Michel al-Murr. According to the information,

Prime Minister 'Umar Karami and Minister of Post and Telecommunications George Sa'adah are also targets.

The security authorities said the plan is designed to torpedo the process of stability and prevent every current reconciliation attempt in order to sow doubts and return the country to the whirlpool of violence.

The authorities added that preliminary intelligence has been gathered about the plotters. These plotters are not Lebanese, and their interests will be harmed by the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement, especially regarding to the establishment of the state's sovereignty over all the Lebanese territories through the state's forces and the implementation of Resolution 425—which is designed to spread the state's authority when an international consensus is secured to separate the Lebanese issue from that of the Middle East, thereby closing the Lebanese file.

The security authorities advised the targeted figures to be cautious and careful about their movements.

Minister Says Unofficial Militias Should Disband

NC2303201991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr has stated that there must be only one rifle on Lebanese territory; namely, the rifle of the legitimate authority.

Meanwhile, Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has stated that there is a difference between the militias and the resistance, and that the time of resistance ends when a country is liberated.

Amid these two stands, the issue of the armed Palestinian organizations remains a subject of serious discussion on both the domestic and the Lebanese-Syrian fronts. In addition, there is a behind-the-scenes Soviet effort in this respect.

We begin with what Minister Michel al-Murrat stated in an interview with our radio on the "Saturday Salon" show this morning. Responding to a question about the non-Lebanese militias, the minister said: There must be no non-Lebanese militias on Lebanese territory, and these militias and the Lebanese militias must be dissolved simultaneously; [corrects himself] that is to say, the non-Lebanese militias should be disbanded before the Lebanese militias, and they should surrender their weapons to the legitimate authority. [passage omitted]

Dib on Militias, Government 'Imbalance'

NC2403083491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Minister of State Roger Dib has said that in its latest session, the Council of Ministers agreed to hold further discussions and consultations on the dissolution of militias and the appointment of deputies. In a statement to the newspaper AL-NIDA', he added that there is

an agreement to try to reach an understanding regarding the government imbalance. He called for postponing the decision on the appointment of deputies and for enhancing and expanding the authority of the state.

RFL Cites Al-Hirawi on Government Achievements

NC2103120791 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 0945 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has said that the state has succeeded in restoring its control over decisionmaking, in stopping the deterioration, in efforts to restore the south to the state's control, and in implementing the security plans that reestablish the state's control over Greater Beirut and its public facilities as a step toward establishing the complete sovereignty over the entire country.

In an address to the Lebanese on the occasion of World Child Day, al-Hirawi said that what has been achieved so far reflects the nation's undiminished resolve to rebuild the country and trust in the legitimate government as the only means to establish peace on a firm foundation.

Hizballah 'Source' Criticizes Al-Hirawi Statement

NC2403081991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Commenting on a statement by President Ilyas al-Hirawi on the end of the era of resistance against Israel, a responsible Hizballah source has stated the following: We had thought that a change, albeit small, had occurred in the mentality of those who were installed in high positions of responsibility. We had also thought that such a change would be harmonious, albeit partially, with what has been presented as being the reform of the past system. Under the reformed system, the decision-making process now rests with the cabinet and not with a single person, namely the president of the Republic.

We have been surprised by some statements and stands which make us doubt that some are complying with or convinced of what has been agreed upon in this respect. The talk about the end of the era of resistance conflicts with the cabinet statement, which stresses the legality of the resistance and the continuation of its role as long as the land remains occupied. Such talk is an indication of the continuation of the sectarian mentality, which refuses, even superficially, to give up its privileges and insists on entrenching the hegemony of one individual and dictatorial authority.

The source added: Any talk about the end of the resistance role before the liberation of all occupied land provokes doubt and suspicion, given the futility of the diplomatic and political means. These means lack strength, especially with an expansionist enemy that does not hide its plans and designs against the land and water. It is possible that there is a new plan similar to the 17 May agreement, which was annulled by the sacrifices of the martyrs.

The resistance to the Zionist enemy is free and honest even if its ideological and political orientations are varied. Without this resistance, the major part of the homeland would not have been liberated and nothing that we call entity or establishments would have remained. Consequently, the state officials would not have been able to enjoy their posts or power.

We hope that those in positions of responsibility will understand the difference between an agent who collaborates with the occupation and a resistance fighter, who has watered every inch liberated from the filth of the invaders with his pure blood.

The Hizballah source expressed hope that the officials will stop making unstudied statements and bear their responsibility in providing the means of livelihood for our people, who have become fed up of ringing and improvised speeches and are daily suffering from the fire of the occupation forces. Let these officials know that the resistance will remain and continue and no one will be able to abolish it as long as occupation forces exist. The resistance truly expresses the will of our people. Anything else is false.

Phalangist Party's Sa'adah on Return to Cabinet

NC2203084991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
0615 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] In an interview with AL-LIWA', Phalangist Party leader Minister George Sa'adah said: We hope our return to the government will constitute a true and firm step in the process of reconciliation, not a superficial or temporary one. We are confident that we, along with the other colleague ministers, will be able to free Lebanon once and for all from the 16-year-old civil war.

Asked about the assurances he was given to return to the Cabinet, Sa'adah said: We cannot disclose anything about the very positive talks that have taken place recently with President al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Karami. We hope the train will be set in motion quickly now that it has been fuelled, and we hope it will not stop before it reaches its final destination.

Ja'ja' Congratulates Al-Murr, Denounces Assault

NC2103200091 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 1945 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] Lebanese Forces Commander Dr. Samir Ja'ja' telephoned Defense Minister Michel al-Murr today to congratulate him on his safety and denounce the assassination attempt against him.

Hizballah Condemns Iraq's 'Major Crimes'

NC1903115091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Hizballah has issued a statement on the Iraqi regime's major crimes against our people in Iraq. Addressing Muslims and the oppressed, and the children

of Hizballah, the statement said: The news of the massacres committed by the Iraqi regime against the Muslim people in our dear Iraq came as no surprise to us, given that this regime is guilty of wrongs against its people on a scale never experienced by any other people, and given that the regime was built on the skulls of the oppressed. The statement said it is all the more painful that this regime should have retreated before the enemy of the [Islamic] nation, shirked the fight, and agreed to humiliating terms, with the object of continuing to control the people. In the meantime, this regime mercilessly kills its own people and commits massacre after massacre against women, children, and the elderly, as happened yesterday at the holy city of Karabala', where the henchmen of the regime shot at the citizens and ran them over, martyring 400 innocents. [passage omitted]

Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has appealed for intervention by the United Nations, human rights organizations, and Islamic and liberation forces, asking that they stop the ruling Baghdad regime's crimes against the Iraqi people. 'Allamah Fadlallah issued a statement saying that the news from Iraq is that the Iraqi regime's army is waging a cruel, genocidal war against defenseless Iraqi women, children, and the elderly, deploying its complete arsenal, including internationally-banned arms. The regime has unscrupulously shelled holy shrines in Karbala' and al-Najaf, the statement said. [passage omitted]

Irish Defense Minister Meets With Al-Hirawi

NC1603110791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1015 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has been meeting since noon today with Irish Defense Minister Brendan Daly, who arrived in Beirut this morning accompanied by the Irish chief of staff, the Irish ambassador, and ranking Army officers.

Daly will meet with Defense Minister Michel al-Murr later and then travel to Tibnin on board a helicopter of the international forces to take part in celebrations of St. Patrick's day tomorrow with Irish soldiers.

SLA Leader Discusses Border Security Transfer

NC2103091991 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 0845 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] Major General Antoine Lahd, commander of South Lebanon Army [SLA], has said he believes there may be a settlement in the region which will also include Lebanon. He added that the process of handing over the border security zone to the central government in Beirut may take place in accordance with preset conditions and following negotiations with the parties concerned, including Israel.

Israel Attacks Resistance Elements in South

NC2103103091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain
in Arabic to Lebanon 1007 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] According to an urgent REUTER dispatch we have just received, an Israeli commando group has attacked Islamic resistance elements in the village of al-Luwayzah in Iqlim al-Tuffah. REUTER did not provide other details.

Hizballah Says Civilians Killed

NC2103115991 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 1045 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] REUTER has cited security sources in the south as saying that an Israeli commando group today attacked a car carrying Hizballah elements in the town of al-Luwayzah in Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Hizballah sources, however, said the Israeli troops positioned in the town of Sujud fired a rocket at a civilian car carrying a family on its way to al-Luwayzah, killing a woman and injuring her husband. Media sources in West Beirut said two citizens were killed today on the road between al-Luwayzah and Imlih as a result of Israeli shelling.

Amal, Hizballah Clash in Southern Beirut 22 Mar

NC2403154191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 1445 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Two days ago, a dispute rose between Amal Movement and Hizballah men in the Southern Suburb [of Beirut]. It developed into a heavy exchange of fire, during which two Amal Movement members were wounded. This is the first such incident since the normalization of ties between the Amal Movement and Hizballah.

Damascus Reports Al-Shar' AFP Interview

NC2203230291 *Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic*
2115 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said in an interview with AFP that if peace is to be established in the region, Israel's occupation of Arab territories must be ended.

The minister added that the Israeli officials who refuse to end the occupation and to achieve regional peace still live in a cold war climate and the pre-Gulf crisis era. He said that some of them continue to have a medieval mentality.

Al-Shar' declared that if Israel continues to refuse to implement UN resolutions and comply with international legitimacy, it will place itself at odds with the entire international community. He pointed out that Israel's friends, who believe in establishing a new international order, realize in advance that this cannot be accomplished as long as Israel denies international legitimacy and rejects UN resolutions.

Al-Shar' added that any talk of ending the state of war or proceeding with confidence-building measures before ending the Israeli occupation is like putting the cart before the horse. He noted that Syria has conveyed this position to all the foreign delegations that recently visited the country.

The minister said that Syria believes that trying to reach a solution in a piecemeal fashion before convening an international conference will obstruct and delay a solution and draw the region away from peace. He added that President Hafiz al-Asad explained to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker that resolving the Middle East issue in a comprehensive manner requires an international conference under UN auspices.

The minister said that during his talks in Damascus, Baker did not rule out an international conference at the right time. Al-Shar' further said that Syria believes that if preparations are begun for an international conference, this will necessarily lead to setting an appropriate date. He pointed out that UN resolutions provide for convening such a conference, particularly UN Security Council Resolution 344 which was issued directly in the wake of resolution 338.

Al-Shar' added that during his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, James Baker emphasized that the United States was determined to use a single standard in dealing with UN resolutions on the Middle East crisis, just as they were applied to the Gulf crisis.

Al-Shar' noted that Baker did not propose a specific plan for a settlement but brought with him principles for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for-peace formula. He declared that the use of force and the continued occupation of Arab territories do not guarantee Israeli security.

Al-Shar' said that in the view of Syria and of the other Arab signatories to the Damascus Declaration, these principles constitute a serious beginning to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The foreign minister declared that the determination expressed by President George Bush in his recent address to the U.S. Congress is not less important than these principles.

Damascus Media Discusses Iraqi Revolution

'Sole Salvation' for Iraq

NC2403162391 *Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic*
1230 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen, what preoccupies us and the Arabs these days regarding the situation in fraternal Iraq is our concern to spare the Iraqi people further suffering and hardships after having been besieged by misery and devoured by tribulations since they were afflicted with the Saddam Husayn rule 11 years ago. The situation in Iraq now, according to all the reports coming out of there and the accounts of eyewitnesses, no longer revolves around the old question of whether Saddam Husayn will remain in power in Iraq? The question is now: When will Saddam Husayn depart and leave to Iraq and the Iraqis what is left of their dreams and ambitions, so that they can build with these the future of Iraq?

The defeat of Saddam Husayn now or tomorrow in the face of the will of the Iraqi people is no longer doubtful, as all Iraqis have risen up from the farthest north to the farthest south to judge and punish the tyrant. This is after most of Iraq's cities and villages have come under the control of the rebels, who are today continuing their march toward Baghdad, and after the biggest part of the heroic Iraqi Army has chosen to join the rebels and participate in the battles for the liberation of Iraq from the tyrant and his clique. Achieving all of this and sparing Iraq and its people further suffering and tragedies can only be achieved when the Baghdad ruler realizes that his holding power in Iraq will be of no use, and that it will only widen the river of blood to engulf every house in Iraq and bring death to the Iraqi people and their Army in the worst massacres ever committed by a ruler against his people.

Despite our awareness that the popular revolution in Iraq is about to end the situation in favor of the Iraqis and topple the Baghdad regime, however, the history of the Iraqi ruler does not give us any ground for hope that he will work a miracle this time and leave one good thing in the last days of the decline of his rule by responding to the will of the people and leaving the scene of his own accord, thus sparing Iraqi blood and submitting to the insurmountable realities that have emerged on the land of Iraq today for the good of Iraq and the nation. For the history of the Iraqi ruler has always been a series of failed experiments which he deliberately chose to test his decisions, contrary to logic and reason, and contrary to

the interests of Iraq and the nation. Moreover, the history of the Iraqi ruler has always been rife with recalcitrance which would be embraced only by those who have grown accustomed to entertaining illusions, and who do not appreciate the dimensions of the responsibility they bear toward their peoples and their nation. Therefore, Saddam Husayn will not spare a single drop of blood in the carnage. And, if he can, he will not leave anything in Iraq unspoiled.

The popular revolution that has swept the cities and villages of Iraq is now the sole salvation that will put out the last light of illusion in the eyes of the tyrant of Baghdad about the final confrontation, in which Saddam Husayn will reap defeat and be stifled by its bitterness, and Iraq will win the first victory which will usher in its new, free era.

Saddam Pursuing 'New Massacre'

NC2203162391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1230 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen, to the world's surprise and astonishment, the Baghdad ruler is continuing his bloody new chapter against the Iraqi people and Army before the tears of the Iraqis, the victims of the Iraqi regime's war, have dried. To the world's surprise and astonishment, the Iraqi ruler is pursuing a new massacre. He intends to kill the remaining Iraqis and destroy their resources and livelihood in another war within the borders of the stricken country. He uses his aides and henchmen, armed with the weapons that were left to the Iraqis, so that the soldier can assassinate his brother and the security man kill his kinfolk and neighbors in the most tragic scenes people have known in this age, and perhaps in all ages.

All of this is happening in Iraq because Saddam Husayn is looking for a victory anywhere, any time, and in any direction without asking himself in whose interest or over whom this victory is. He has not made any calculations to discern the horizons of victory and defeat so as not to carry the burden of the dead. These number hundreds of thousands, beginning with his executions of the first group of his comrades in the first days of his rule, until now when thousands of dead bodies are piling up in the streets of al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, al-Najaf, Karbala', Karkuk, Mosul, and Khanaqin.

Have the Arabs throughout ages and the world ever seen such a hideous crime and such a ruler who sleeps and wakes on the blood of his people, which is being shed uselessly just because the ruler's temper will not be good if he does not see blood. For more than 11 years, dear Iraq has witnessed a series of horrors. They are pictures of killing and destruction, showing death on roads and at the fabricated battlefronts. They demonstrate further lust for power, which is now the whole world's main topic.

The latest statistics say that 200,000 Iraqis have lost their lives in the Gulf war, in addition to hundreds of thousands more who were captured or wounded for no reason and without cause, other than adhering to an illegal invasion of fraternal peaceful Kuwait. When the Iraqis returned to their cities and villages to dress their wounds, Saddam Husayn's bombs arrived before them, bombing their houses, streets, and farms, so that he can claim the victory he lost in the Gulf war, a victory he lied about. Can the Iraqis now be blamed as they take to the streets in every city with bare chests to confront Saddam Husayn's bullets, especially since death has been their inevitable fate for more than 11 years, and that the death the Iraqis have chosen this time has become the only way to victory? Can the Iraqis be blamed that their patience has come to an end, that they are destroying the walls of their prisons, and moving from all directions to cross the distance to freedom and to determine their own future, no matter how dear the price might be after they paid a price in the reckless wars the regime has waged without an objective or cause?

Despite all past and future pain, the popular revolution in Iraq is the only way for the Iraqis to taste victory in the right place and at the right time. It is the way that cannot be defeated as long as it is armed with the will of the people and baptized with pain the people have been suffering for a full decade. The only victory left for the ruler of Iraq is to triumph over himself, his bloody temper, and his lust for power, and to leave Iraq to the Iraqis to treat their wounds, rebuild their homeland, and embrace their nation after this estrangement the tyrant imposed on Iraq in the toughest chapter the Arabs have known during their contemporary history.

'Judgment' Awaits Baghdad Supporters

NC2403133891 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
16 Mar p 9

["AL-THAWRAH Issues" column by Ahmad 'Aja:
"The Great Sins...and the Judgment!"]

[Text] The war that the Iraqi regime arrogantly wanted has ended in a terrible catastrophe for Iraq—Army, people, and capabilities. The war of the regime against the people is beginning a new phase, although the assessment of losses has not ended yet.

Indeed, amid the terrible catastrophe the patient Iraqi people are experiencing, the regime is gathering up the remains of its so-called Republican Guards to fight "the mother of battles." The misleading media of the regime long propagandized for this battle, whose tunes were harped by those who supported the Baghdad rulers in invading Kuwait, encouraged them to persist in their intransigence, and hailed them as they drove the people of Iraq and its Army to the slaughter.

What will those whose sin was and continues to be equal to that of the Baghdad rulers say? Their sin is perhaps even greater than that of the Iraqi regime itself, which was arrogantly intoxicated by the propaganda campaign

organized by the deceivers. They rushed to disavow their positions the moment the hellish war machinery came to a halt, although they had encouraged the Iraqi regime to confront it while realizing the consequences.

What do they have to say about the outcome of the war? What do they have to say about the current war of the Iraqi regime against the people? Which tunes do their media harp? Where is their diplomacy headed?! Those misled deceivers forgot all their words that dragged the Baghdad rulers into their foolish gamble, and sought forgiveness explicitly or implicitly, using the same words they repeated in their one-upmanship.

They speak of the need to open a new page of inter-Arab relations, forget the past, and unify ranks, as if what happened and is happening can be sidestepped with these acrobatic positions and words that have lost all their meanings, except the exposed meaning of changing positions and acting hypocritically!

They are ignoring the destruction, the outcome of what they wanted for Iraq. Moreover, they have not uttered a single word about the massacres of the Baghdad rulers against the Iraqi people, who paid a heavy price for the regime's adventure and gamble. The Iraqi people also paid a heavy price for the defeat of the empty arrogance of leaders, who remained captive to their narrow and selfish illusions and ambitions, and slaves to roles they have mastered playing, always contrary to the will of the Iraqi people and Army.

Do the Iraq leaders, as usual, simply not give a hoot about all the slogans they raised during all ordeals they were involved in, in which they entangled the Iraqi people and Army?

Do those who encouraged the Baghdad rulers to proceed on the road to the abyss want us to simply accept their silence over the massacres taking place in Iraq on top of the catastrophes and setbacks that have befallen Iraq?

Can one simply speak of forgiving and turning a new page when the fires set by the Baghdad rulers in Iraq and on the arena of pan-Arab action are still ablaze—as though those who encourage the Baghdad rulers are pouring more oil on these fires? It is a strange paradox. Now is the time of judgment, however. None of the sinful or deceitful will be allowed to wash their hands and mouths of their offenses and great sins!!

'Indiscriminate' Shelling Cited

NC2303190391 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1705 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Hasakah, 23 Mar (SANA)—New arrivals from Iraq at al-Hawl camp near al-Hasakah today said that fierce battles are under way between popular forces and the forces of the Iraqi regime in Mosul in northern Iraq.

The arrivals say that large numbers of the Republican Guards in Ninawa Governorate are continuing to join the popular forces. The arrivals added that those fighting in

defense of the regime are a minority of profiteers and Republican Guards who are relatives of Saddam Husayn.

The arrivals said the Iraqi regime's forces are indiscriminately shelling cities controlled by the popular forces, particularly in the northern parts of Iraq. The use of artillery, tanks, and helicopters by the regime's forces against these cities has led to hundreds of deaths among civilians, as well as to the destruction of strategic roads and important bridges. The aim of the regime forces is to cut off supplies from the opposition forces and prevent the latter from advancing toward Baghdad.

The arrivals also spoke of the hardships being suffered by the Iraqi people in the current phase due to overwhelming chaos and an increase in theft, robbery, looting, and murder.

Iraqi Regime's Policies Denounced

NC2203190991 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1823 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Hasakah, 22 Mar (SANA)—Iraqi brothers who arrived in al-Hawl camp in al-Hasakah today reported that the Iraqi regime sent a military force consisting of more than ten tanks and troops to Dahuk three days ago in an attempt to recapture the city from the popular forces. This force failed in its attempt, after ferocious battles with heavy artillery and various other types of weapons between the two sides.

The arrivals asserted that all the cities, villages, and rural areas of Dahuk Governorate are still under the control of the popular forces and that the rebellious masses have seized the palaces belonging to the head of the Iraqi regime in Kara Mountain in the governorate.

The arrivals told the SANA correspondent in al-Hasakah that the popular forces stormed the prisons and detention camps in Dahuk Governorate and liberated the prisoners. The popular forces found tunnels and underground passages, administered by the Iraqi regime's security forces, in several areas of the governorates where political prisoners had been held. Some of these prisoners had not seen daylight for a very long time and were in very poor health after torture and other methods of repression. Some detainees had been held there for over 15 years.

The arrivals also reported that ferocious battles are continuing on the approaches to Mosul and that the regime's forces are using many detained citizens as human shields to deter attacks by the popular forces.

The arrivals denounced the Iraqi regime's policy that brought only ruin and devastation to the country. They asserted that the head of the Iraqi regime, who is concerned only about his own interests, must step down in compliance with the people's wishes and spare Iraq further tragedies and calamities.

They said that the escalation of the popular resistance operations in all of the northern, central, and southern

Iraqi cities; the spread of the revolution to Tikrit; and the successes achieved by the opposition forces will necessarily bring down this unjust regime and liberate Iraq from its tyranny.

Jihad Vowed Until Saddam Toppled

NC2303193691 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1640 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 23 Mar (SANA)—The Iraqi opposition masses staged a national rally this morning to mark 23 March 1991 as a day of solidarity with the Iraqi people, who are staging an uprising against the Iraqi regime.

The march began in front of the premises of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front. It was led by several Iraqi opposition leaders and a large crowd of women, men, elderly people, and children who proceeded toward the UN Damascus office and gathered there, raising placards and shouting nationalist slogans asserting their determination to protect Iraq and its resources from the injustice and tyranny of the Iraqi regime, and their firm resolve to continue the struggle until the fascist Iraqi regime is toppled.

The marchers urged the United Nations to protect the Iraqi people from the crimes being committed by the head of the Iraqi regime, who is violating human rights through his use of internationally banned chemical weapons, and also through his perpetration of various forms of killing and torture against our Arab people in Iraq.

The Iraqi demonstrators branded the head of the Iraqi regime as Iraq's tyrant, a war addict, and a slayer of peoples, affirming their resolve and determination to continue jihad until the Iraqi regime is toppled.

Paper Terms International Legitimacy 'Indivisible'

NC2103073891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0551 GMT 21 Mar 91

[From the Press Review]

[Text] Under the headline "International Legitimacy is Indivisible," AL-BA'TH says: As the war ended in the Gulf, the world focused its attention on the Middle East as a whole. This is because for more than 40 years it has been the most tense region in the world. AL-BA'TH says that there is a dire need to achieve peace and stability in this region on the basis of the UN resolutions, particularly since world public opinion has supported the strong pressure brought to bear by international legitimacy to implement the UN resolutions in the Gulf. World public opinion is looking for a firm position on the part of international legitimacy to implement the UN resolutions on the Middle East.

The newspaper adds that the Tel Aviv rulers have realized that world public opinion is focusing its attention on the Middle East, demanding the implementation of the UN resolutions. Therefore, they began to maneuver to absorb the international pressures, hoping to get over the post-Gulf war stage before renewing their resistance to the UN resolutions. They were not satisfied with criticizing the remarks made by U.S. President George Bush in his state of the union address on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. They also announced that they have differences with the United States regarding the principle adopted by the U.S. president in his speech; namely, the principle of land in exchange for peace.

The newspaper affirms that these maneuvers are aimed to drag world public opinion to partial and secondary issues to divert attention from the basic issue in the region, that of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of the UN Charter and resolutions.

Afghanistan

Further Reportage on Clashes Near Khowst

Rebels Capture Security Posts

BK2203163691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, as the decisive battle for the control of Khowst Garrison continues, the mujahidin captured 18 security posts and nine tanks of the Kabul regime today. They captured 15 security posts and eight tanks near the Bak and Yaqubi Subdistricts, north of Khowst, besides seizing three armored vehicles and 35 heavy weapons. South of Khowst, the mujahidin took three security posts at Mazare and captured one tank, four military trucks, a cannon, and 20 Kabul military personnel, including four officers.

In another operation, the mujahidin reportedly captured an Afghan secret police center at [words indistinct], killing one officer and wounding three others. They repulsed an attack by the Kabul forces near the Amu River in Takhar Province and seized a large quantity of arms and ammunition, including Kalashnikov rifles and hand bombs.

Mujahidin Seize Jaji Meydan Area

• • • BK2303151091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1457 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 23 (AFP)—Afghan resistance groups said Saturday they had seized control of Jaji Meydan District, strengthening their bid to liberate the town of Khowst from government forces.

The district which lies about 40 kilometres (25 miles) northeast of Khowst in Paktia Province, on the border with Pakistan, fell to the mujahidin after a mass surrender by government militia, the resistance-run MIDIA [Media Information Department of Islamic Afghanistan] news agency said. It was the first time mujahidin forces had controlled Jaji Meydan, which was known as "a small Moscow because of its hardline communist inhabitants," the agency said.

"Mujahidin have conquered all strategic points around Khowst," Commander Jalaluddin Haqqani, who is leading the Khowst operations, was quoted as saying in a wireless message. The battle for Khowst was launched March 14 with simultaneous attacks in Jaji Meydan.

Commander Haqqani said the Kabul regime forces had retreated to Khowst's downtown bazaar and the mujahidin had intercepted radio messages appealing to the government to send transport planes to evacuate them. "The siege of Khowst by mujahidin makes it impossible for any planes to land in the town and they can't run away," he said. "Despite more than 40 Scud missiles, heavy bombardment from the air and sowing of thousands of mines, the mujahidin have continuously advanced towards Khowst," he said.

MIDIA, which is operated by the Afghan Interim Government (AIG) of six mujahidin parties based here, said the resistance had offered a general amnesty for those government troops who chose to surrender.

Indicating that the fall of Khowst was close, the commander said the "liberation" of the town would mark "a significant change in the so-called stalemate and herald a new season of mujahidin activities." He also directed the resistance fighters to show "compassion and sympathy" towards the Kabul soldiers who desert or surrender.

The Hezb-e Eslami Party of Afghanistan (HEA), which is outside the fold of the AIG, also reported mujahidin successes Saturday, notably north of Khowst.

Kabul Troops Repulse Attack

LD2303173391 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The units and subunits of the Armed Forces stationed in Khowst have courageously and bravely repulsed a joint attack launched in the northeastern part of this area by the warmongering extremists and Pakistani militarists, and imposed on them heavy loss of life and material. The BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY military section reported that as a result of air and artillery blows by the heroic Armed Forces of the country that shelled positions and trenches of the warmongering extremists, 50 men, including Mola Shahzada and a number of other ringleaders, were crushed, and 78 more were injured. Most of those killed or injured were men attached to Mawlawi Khalis and Golbuddin extremist groups.

As a result of these blows, several of their weapons and ammunition depots, positions, and headquarters were destroyed. According to another report, the units and subunits of the armed forces stationed in Jaji Meydan District, by all-around cooperation of this district's brave and proud people, pushed back attacks by the enemies of the people and homeland in various directions. The patriotic people of Jaji Meydan, supporting the personnel of the Armed Forces, have actively participated in repulsing attacks by the warmongering extremists, and they are standing courageously in the trench of defending the country. The units and subunits of the Armed Forces stationed in Khowst, as well as the courageous people of this province, with high combat morale and feelings of patriotism are discharging their national duty courageously and bravely, and they are ready to neutralize, repulse, and eliminate every probable attack by the enemies of the country and people.

Tribal Jerga in Khowst Held

LD2303212591 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] In order to foil and eliminate the joint attacks of the warmongering extremists and Pakistani militarists on Khowst, a broad jerga of the various tribes of Khowst Province was held today. According to a report from the

BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY military section, the work of the jerga—which was attended by scholars and religious leaders, elderly people, and intellectuals from Khowst—began with the recitation of a few verses from the Koran.

Major General Shahbaz, chief of staff of the National Guard, praised the heroism and bravery of the patriotic people of Khowst who have always defended and protected every inch of the soil of the country with gallantry and bravery against the enemies of our homeland and people. He commended their active participation in this great national and patriotic mission.

A number of the participants in the jerga then spoke on behalf of the various tribes of Khowst, and expressed their full readiness in the defense and protection of the independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty of the homeland, this great inheritance of our zealous forefathers. The work of the jerga ended with a prayer read out for the success of right over wrong, the victory of the defenders of the homeland, and the defeat of the aggressors.

Kabul Said Using Scuds, Napalm

BK2403093291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0919 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 24 (AFP)—Heavy fighting was taking place Sunday near the Afghan garrison city of Khowst, the target of a 10-day offensive by Afghan resistance fighters, rebel and diplomatic sources said.

Western diplomats in Islamabad said the pro-Soviet government in Kabul was reportedly using large numbers of Scud missiles and napalm bombs in an attempt to break the siege on the city, 30 kilometers (20 miles) from Pakistan. Hundreds of people continue to flee the fighting and bombardment, according to witnesses.

The Afghan resistance claimed Sunday to have captured 20 government defensive positions and the sector of Sheikh Amir, just two kilometers (one mile) southeast of the city. "Heavy fighting is continuing," said Najibullah Lafra'i, information minister of the opposition Afghan Interim Government.

(In Kabul, the state radio late Saturday said the attack on Khowst had been repulsed and on Sunday the government denied mujahidin claims that they had overrun and captured the district of Jaji Maydan, near Khowst, following heavy fighting.

(A Foreign Ministry spokesman said government troops had beaten back a mujahidin attack on the district, killing 50 guerrillas and wounding another 78. "There has been heavy combat, and government forces, assisted by local residents and militia, have inflicted substantial losses on the enemy," the spokesman said. "Our forces killed 50 guerrillas and wounded 78 others," he added without saying when the casualties occurred. Mujahidin

groups said earlier they had seized most defensive posts around Khowst, strengthening their bid to wrest Khowst from government forces.)

Islamabad, the mujahidin's chief backer, has strongly denied Kabul's accusations that Pakistani regular troops and militiamen are participating in the fighting.

(Kabul officials said Afghan Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil sent a second message in a week to UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar, accusing Pakistan of aggression. "We have undeniable evidence that the attack on Khowst is being directed by Pakistani generals. I ask you to take necessary steps to stop this aggression," he said.)

Kabul has called for a meeting of the UN Security Council to discuss the Khowst situation, the officials said. Khowst has been the target of several unsuccessful rebel offensives since the Soviet Union withdrew its forces from Afghanistan two years ago.

Battle Reaches Khowst Outskirts

BK2403135691 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1300 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say mujahidin have battled their way to the edge of the garrison city of Khowst in Paktia Province. However, the Kabul regime troops are trying to fight back with Scud missiles and napalm bombs. The Afghan mujahidin have overrun fortifications of the Kabul regime troops around Khowst. Military posts in (Mubarak), (Dargah), (Ghata Kheyl), and (Bayjogi) have been wiped out and most of the Kabul regime troops stationed at these posts have fled to Khowst. Over 45 troops have been killed and 170 captured. Nine mujahidin have been martyred in the 10-day operation which is still in progress. The mujahidin are reportedly advancing to the cantonment from three sides.

Mujahidin Down Transport Plane

BK2503014691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0100 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say mujahidin have tightened the noose around the garrison city of Khowst in Paktia Province. They have intensified artillery and rocket attacks, and they are advancing from all four sides. According to reports, a large-scale battle is under way, and Kabul regime airplanes are carrying out heavy bombing raids. A transport plane carrying supplies to Khowst was shot down, killing the pilot and crew. As part of the operations, the mujahidin occupied three posts on the outskirts of city. Many troops were killed in the operation.

Kabul Troops Claim Successes

LD2403151191 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The units and companies of the Armed Forces stationed in Khowst have launched counterattacks on

the positions and centers of the warmongering extremists in the regions of (Sheykh Khan), Kandi and Latak and inflicted heavy casualties on them.

According to a report by the BAKHTAR military section, as a result of this operation a number of extremists were crushed, including Pashah and Safir, two ringleaders of the Golbuddin gang, and five tanks and thousands of shells for heavy weapons were seized by the brave Armed Forces personnel.

The units and companies of the Armed Forces have also repulsed the attacks of the warmongering extremists and Pakistani militarists to the northeast and southeast of Khowst, and inflicted crushing blows on their trenches and positions. As a result, a number of extremists were crushed, including 22 ringleaders of the extremists groups of Mawlawi Yunis Khalis and Golbuddin. Several heavy weapons and positions were destroyed.

According to another report, the personnel of (?Farm) security posts Farm) in Khowst have heroically pushed back joint attacks by the extremists groups of Mawlawi Khalis and the Pakistani militarists. Dozens of extremists were crushed and other members of the group were forced to retreat from the battlefield.

The units and companies of the Armed Forces in Khowst have successfully carried out their national and patriotic duties with high combat morale and with patriotic feeling against the extremists and foreign aggressors. They are ready to foil any type of joint attack by the warmongering extremists and Pakistani militarists.

Wakil's Message to UN Chief Protests 'Aggression'

LD2303182991 *Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto*
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Message from Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on "the renewal of attacks and aggressions by Pakistan in collaboration with the extremist opposition groups"; date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] His Excellency UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar:

Following my previous letter, I would like to notify you once again on the continuation and renewal of aggression by Pakistan against the Republic of Afghanistan.

As stated in my previous letter, the military operation by some units, military, and militia of Pakistan, in collaboration with the opposition extremists groups, continues against Khowst. In this operation, they used rockets and artillery against the innocent people and civilian installations, which caused loss of life and material among the civilians. At the same time, Pakistan and the opposition extremist groups continue land operations against Khowst, further intensifying the situation. Through the office of the permanent representative of the Republic of Afghanistan in the United Nations, I explained the situation during your

meeting with representatives of the Republic of Afghanistan, who handed my last letter to you. I would like to express the appreciation of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan on the fact that you paid attention to the Republic of Afghanistan's concern and on the fact that you have told him that you will raise this issue with the representative of Pakistan and will inform the Security Council members on this subject.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has in hand undeniable documents and evidence which reveal that Pakistani generals and officers are directly guiding military operations against Khowst.

Once again, I draw Your Excellency's attention to these continued aggressions, which have been carried out against a neighboring country contrary to the Geneva accords between the two countries and contrary to the UN Charter and all international norms. This will bring about very damaging consequences for peace, stability, and security in the region.

We are obliged to use all forces and possibilities to defend our legitimate right to defend our independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity by repulsing this blatant aggression.

I ask Your Excellency to inform, once again, the Security Council members on this subject and to prevent the continuation of this aggression by taking urgent measures.

Taking the opportunity, I renew my sincere best wishes for Your Excellency's good health.

Pakistani Charge Receives Protest Note

LD2303200191 *Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto*
1430 GMT 23 Mar 91

["Protest note" from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Pakistani charge d'affaires in Kabul on "the intensification of aggression and attacks, supported by opposition extremist groups," against Afghanistan; delivered in Kabul on 23 March—read by announcer]

[Text] Following the Foreign Ministry's last letter to the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul regarding direct participation of Pakistani Army units and militia in operations against Khowst, aggression by the Pakistani militia and army, supported by the opposition extremist groups, has been intensified in Khowst.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has in hand undeniable evidence that military operations against Khowst have been carried out under the direct orders from Pakistani generals and officers. The Pakistani Government has begun new military movements near the Khowst border and has intensified its military preparedness.

The Republic of Afghanistan regards it as its right to utilize all its possibilities to defend the country's independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity. The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has taken necessary measures in this respect.

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan is fully capable to push back the aggressor and defend the honor of beloved Afghanistan.

In expressing its strong protest to the intensification of aggression by Pakistan against the Republic of Afghanistan and intensification of military operation against Khowst, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan points out that the responsibility for the tragic effects resulting from the continuation of aggression against the Republic of Afghanistan will rest with the Pakistani Government.

Pakistani Envoy Summoned Over Airspace Violation

*LD2403153691 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1430 GMT 24 Mar 91*

[Text] The Information and Publication Department of the Foreign Ministry reports that the Pakistani charge d'affaires in Kabul was summoned to the Foreign Ministry this morning and a protest note was handed to him by the head of the ministry's First Political Department. The text follows:

The relevant authorities of the Republic of Afghanistan report that at 2158 on 23-24 March [as heard] a Pakistani aircraft was observed flying at 800 km per hour 25 km south of Khowst. It entered the airspace of the Republic of Afghanistan at 2200 and left after a one-minute reconnaissance.

The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan strongly protests such aggressive action in Afghan airspace by Pakistan's Air Force. This is considered a flagrant violation of international norms and relations and of the provisions of the Geneva accords.

It calls on Pakistan's responsible authorities to prevent the repetition of such aggression. Naturally, the responsibility for the grave consequences resulting from such actions will rest with the Pakistan Government.

Bangladesh

New Cabinet Meets, Reviews Economic Situation

*BK2203131291 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External
Service in English 1230 GMT 22 Mar 91*

[Text] The first meeting of the newly appointed Council of Ministers was held at Bangabhaban [President's House] in Dhaka Thursday night. Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed presided over the meeting. It was attended by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, cabinet ministers, and state ministers. The acting president welcomed the prime minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, and members of her cabinet. He gave a resume of the economic situation prevailing in the country, with particular reference to food sector. The acting president said the food stock of the country is satisfactory to meet any emergency.

In the meeting, which lasted more than one hour, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia thanked the acting president and the administration for holding free and fair elections. She also thanked the acting president for smooth running of the administration in the interim period. Begum Khaleda Zia also recalled the sacrifices of the people who laid down their lives during the mass movement against autocracy.

Khaleda Zia Lists Priorities

*BK2303130791 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External
Service in English 1230 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Text] The prime minister of Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia, has stressed the need for a corruption-free administration in realizing the new government's development-oriented programs to improve the lot of common man. She was addressing the secretaries of various ministries in Dhaka Saturday [23 March]. Corruption, she said, is the main problem and its elimination is priority target of the new government.

Begum Zia sought cooperation of the administration in implementing the policy programs her party had announced during the election campaign. The prime minister said during nine years of autocratic rule, national economy and various financial and democratic institutions have been destroyed. The people, she said, have achieved democracy and a democratically elected government after tremendous sacrifices. She said now the time has come to work for reconstructing and rebuilding financial institutions to boost the economy. Rural electrification, production in mills and factories, increased food production, rehabilitation of sick industries, setting up of cottage industries, mass literacy, creation of job opportunities, population control and control of smuggling are the priority program of the new government.

Referring to women, who constitute 50 percent of the country's population, she said opportunity must be created for them to engage in nation-building work. The prime minister spoke of the need to free the educational campuses of terrorism and arms to create a congenial atmosphere for the students to pursue their normal academic pursuits.

On the country's foreign policy, Begum Zia said the objective is to develop good relations with all countries, particularly the neighboring and Muslim countries. Bilateral problems should be solved through discussion and negotiations. She spoke against domination by one country against another.

Seeks To Resolve Issues With India

*BK2403160391 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 24 Mar 91*

[Text] Begum Khaleda Zia says her government will ensure due share of the Ganges water for Bangladesh through negotiations with India. She was addressing a public meeting at Mirpur in Kushtia today. Begum Zia

said Bangladesh wants to settle all irritants with New Delhi to establish friendly relations with India.

The priority of the new government, she said, is to initiate extensive rural development. The people had struggled during the last nine years against autocracy to establish a people's government. Now is the time to work to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of the people. The prime minister said all will have to work with sincerity and dedication to solve the manifold problems of this impoverished nation. She stressed the need for establishment of medium-and small-scale industries on priority basis to solve the country's unemployment problem.

Commentary Views New Government's Foreign Policy

BK2203140491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Bangladesh pursues a policy of friendship with all countries based on mutual respect for sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity. It also emphasizes the principle of noninterference as one of the bases for building stable and durable relations.

The newly appointed foreign minister, A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman, spelt out some of the directions along which foreign policy would be guided in the future. In his first encounter with the press after taking the new assignment, Mr. Rahman gave an outline of Bangladesh's foreign policy. Dhaka wants friendly ties with all countries and it would like its relations with its immediate neighbors of a mutually beneficial nature.

Dwelling on relations with India, Mr. Rahman said there were several outstanding issues with New Delhi which need to be resolved. [Words indistinct] issues that should be resolved through negotiations. Mr. Rahman expressed the desire of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party government to start these negotiations as quickly as possible. In fact, [words indistinct] areas of concern for the new administration. The main issues for which solutions are required are the settlement of the problem of equitable sharing of common rivers, the handing over of the Tin Bigha Corridor to Bangladesh, the determination of the ownership of the South Talpatty Island, the delimitation of maritime boundary, and the question of repatriation of Chakma refugees from Indian Tripura State. Solutions to these issues can be found if there is sincere intention to work in that direction.

Mr. Rahman has indicated that Bangladesh will want the restoration of the guarantee clause of the 1982 memorandum of understanding on the sharing of the Ganges River. The issue of water sharing is a major irritant in bilateral relations and it should be the prime concern of both New Delhi and Dhaka to remove this stumbling block in the way of good-neighborliness. Bangladesh as a lower riparian country has a legitimate and historic right to the water of the Ganges River. This is also true with respect to the other common rivers, like the Tista. If

there is a permanent understanding on these rivers, it is possible that both countries can benefit from the joint development of water resources. But what has happened contrarily over the years is the drying up of the river flow in Bangladesh during the winter months as massive withdrawal of water took place in the upper riparian region in India. This has had a lingering effect on the environment in Bangladesh, including the appearance of the signs of desertification. The transfer of Tin Bigha Corridor has been stalled by one or the other bureaucratic or legal formalities. Despite assurances by the Indian central government on several occasions, the transfer has not taken place. Similarly, the problem of the return of the Chakma refugees can be resolved with the demonstration of a true friendly spirit.

Bangladesh also wants the resolution of outstanding issues with Pakistan, including the decision [as heard] of the pre-1971 assets and repatriation of Pakistani citizens of Bihari origin from Bangladesh.

Dhaka has been a strong champion of the cause of the Third World. As a spokesman for the least developed countries, Bangladesh will continue to work for a better deal for the world's poorest countries. The new foreign minister has reiterated that his government will continue to persevere in the pro-Third World policy, emphasizing a strong commitment to the problems of the developing countries.

Bangladesh's relations with the Muslim world will be further strengthened in the coming years. An active member of the Islamic Conference Organization, Bangladesh has strongly supported the setting up of an independent state for Palestinians.

Aid Harmful to National Interests Unacceptable

BK2403162091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman says the new government will not take any foreign aid that will harm national interests.

Addressing officials of the Economic Relations Division in Dhaka today, he said the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] administration will make utmost efforts to end the legacy of corruption and mismanagement in aid utilization. The finance minister noted with deep concern existing mismanagement in the banking sector. Banking, he said, has been the worst victim of the autocratic rule and it has to be strengthened on priority basis.

India

Foreign Secretary Talks With Baker, Gates

BK2303080291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] India has assured the U.S. Administration that it would be willing to assume any role requested by the

United Nations in the wake of the Gulf war. The assurance came from the foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, in his meeting with the U.S. secretary of state, Mr. James Baker, and the deputy national security adviser, Mr. Robert Gates, in Washington. Mr. Dubey stressed that the post-Gulf-war arrangements should have a strong economic content of regional cooperation, both for the reconstruction of the war-hit areas and in the larger North-South context.

The U.S. Government, in the course of talks with the foreign secretary, Mr. Dubey, in the last two days, cleared the misunderstanding created by some pro-Pakistani elements on Kashmir.

U.S., Japanese, German Loans Sought

*BK2303162191 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Text] India has approached Germany, Japan, and the good offices of the United States in getting short-term financial assistance to tide over the present foreign exchange reserve crisis. This was stated by the foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, in Washington today, where he had talks with the U.S. secretary of state, Mr. James Baker, and other senior U.S. officials. He said New Delhi had directly approached Germany and Japan and also sought Washington's good offices in getting the assistance from Bonn and Tokyo immediately. Mr. Dubey, however, denied that India had asked for rescheduling its foreign debt. He said India looks for only short-term bridge loans to meet the present crisis. India, however, does not expect any immediate direct help from the United States as Washington cannot give anything without budgetary allocations, which is a lengthy process.

Delhi Approaches EC, Japan for 'Urgent Help'

*BK2503093491 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 25 Mar 91*

[Text] India has formally approached major European Community countries and Japan for assistance to tide over its foreign exchange crisis. The community countries approached include Germany, Britain, France, and the Netherlands. Official sources confirmed reports that the Indian ambassadors in the respective countries have presented New Delhi's case for urgent help.

BJP Rejects Oakley Remarks 'With Contempt'

*BK2203163091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0958 GMT
22 Mar 91*

[By M.R. Narayan Swamy]

[Text] New Delhi, March 22 (AFP)—India's main political parties blasted the United States Friday after its ambassador to Pakistan said Kashmir was not a part of India. Three parties buried their ideological differences to summarily reject the envoy's assertions and asked Washington not to interfere in India's internal affairs.

The strongest attack came from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which said: "The U.S. has no locus standi in Kashmir and its ambassadors have no business giving chits to foreigners about the status of Kashmir or any other part of India. The Indian people reject with contempt the attempt by foreigners to poke their noses into what are our internal concerns and nobody else's," a statement by the pro-Hindu party said.

The Indian Government declined immediate comment on U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Robert Oakley's reported remarks that Washington regarded the northern state of Kashmir as a disputed territory and not an integral part of India. "We have yet to see the authentic text of Mr. Oakley's reported letter," an Indian official spokesman said here.

The United States "does not accept India's contention that the United Nations resolutions no longer apply," Mr. Oakley said in a letter to a Washington-based Kashmiri organisation, reproduced by Indian and Pakistani newspapers. "Our policy is that any resolution of the problem must take into consideration the needs of all affected parties, including India, Pakistan, Moslem Kashmiris and non-Moslem Kashmiris," Mr. Oakley said.

Pakistan wants a plebiscite in Kashmir as mentioned in a 1949 U.N. Resolution. Barring the dominant Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) which is fighting for independence, all other Kashmiri militant groups want Kashmir to accede with Pakistan.

Pakistan disputes the 1947 accession to India of Kashmir, India's only Moslem-majority state, where Moslem militants are leading a violent secessionist campaign. Pakistan holds the northern third of Kashmir.

India accuses Pakistan—with which it has fought two of its three wars over Kashmir—of harbouring, training and arming the Kashmir militants. Islamabad denies the charge but gives diplomatic support to the guerrillas.

The BJP said: "Flush with victory in Iraq, where the U.S. ambassador is credited with having fooled Saddam Husayn into attacking Kuwait, another U.S. ambassador has started giving signals to Pakistan about the U.S. role in Kashmir in the event of Pakistan attacking India. (But) India is not Iraq, and Kashmir is not Kuwait," it added. The BJP said Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital and the urban hub of the Kashmir campaign, "is as much a part of India as Ayodhya," an Indian town where Hindus wants to build a temple at a site disputed by Moslems.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) said the United States, having won the war with Iraq, was trying to show gratitude to Islamabad for joining the allied campaign.

"We strongly condemn this," CPI's deputy leader Muqumuddin Farooqi said. "This ambassador is trying to complicate the situation... It is an attempt to aggravate the situation in the subcontinent. This is hardly the way

to solve the Kashmir problem," he added. "Anyway, I don't think Americans are serious about solving the problem."

Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party said the U.S. stand that Kashmir was not a part of India could not be accepted at any cost. "We reject the U.S. approach and our stand is that Kashmir is an integral part of India," spokesman Vithal Gadgil said here.

No comment was immediately available from the centrist National Front of former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh and the powerful Communist Party of India (Marxist), but they were expected to react strongly.

The Indian Government spokesman told reporters that Washington has previously accepted the Simla agreement of 1972 between India and Pakistan as a basis for resolving the Kashmir dispute.

The Simla Agreement, signed a year after New Delhi and Islamabad fought their last war in December 1971, calls for negotiations to resolve any dispute between the two countries.

Iraqi Embassy Staff Allegedly Fires at Protestors

BK2203161291 *Delhi Domestic Service in English*
1530 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Two persons received minor pellet injuries when anti-Iraq demonstrators were reportedly fired at from inside the Iraqi Embassy in New Delhi this afternoon. According to the additional commissioner of police, Mr. S.K. (Kine), the protesters then indulged in arson and damaged three vehicles, including two belonging to the embassy.

Delhi Accused of Security Failure

BK2203162891 *Hong Kong AFP in English* 1605 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] New Delhi, March 23 (AFP)—The Iraqi Embassy here Saturday accused Indian authorities of not taking adequate steps to protect the mission during a recent violent demonstration. The embassy in a statement "regretted" the incidents had taken place "in a friendly country like India," referring to the violent March Friday by some 600 Shiite Moslems on the embassy.

Witnesses had said gunshots were traded during the protest over the crackdown by Baghdad on a growing Shiite Moslem rebellion in Iraq. The embassy said "demonstrators fired bullets" at the mission, damaging the ambassador's car and two other vehicles. There has been no official Indian reaction to the Iraqi claim.

Seven Killed, 90 Injured in Delhi Bombings

BK2303155791 *Delhi Domestic Service in English*
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Seven people were reported killed and about 90 others injured in two bomb blasts in West Delhi this evening. The injured have been admitted to hospitals and 50 of them are reported to be seriously injured. The blast occurred near a bus stop at Kelagaon near Tilak Nagar.

Sikh Forum Condemns Workers' Deaths in Punjab

BK2303125691 *Delhi Domestic Service in English*
1230 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The Sikh Forum has condemned the dastardly killing of 27 factory workers by militants in Ropar District of Punjab yesterday. In a statement in New Delhi today, the president of the forum, General Jagjit Singh Arora, said certain groups and elements are trying to foment violence in Punjab at a time when the government is seriously considering holding elections in the state.

Haryana Party Chief Resigns; Chautala Elected

BK2203130891 *Delhi Domestic Service in English*
1230 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] In Haryana, in a sudden political development, Mr. Om Prakash Chautala was today elected leader of the Janata Dal-S legislature party. An emergency meeting of the legislature party was held in Chandigarh today where the chief minister, Mr. Hukum Singh, tendered his resignation as leader of the legislature party. The meeting was attended by 39 party legislators and four independents. Earlier in the day, three state ministers resigned from the cabinet and also from the assembly. They are Mr. Dharambir Singh, Mr. Nardev Singh, and Mr. Surendar Madan. Speaking to newsmen in New Delhi, they said that they have resigned in protest against the move to change the state chief minister.

Chautala's Return Criticized

BK2203145891 *Delhi Domestic Service in English*
1430 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Mr. Om Prakash Chautala has taken over as the new chief minister of Haryana. The governor, Mr. Dhanik Lal Mandal, administered the oath of office and secrecy to him at a function in Chandigarh this evening. Earlier, Mr. Chautala in a sudden political development was unanimously elected leader of the state Janata Dal-S legislature party. His name was proposed by the outgoing chief minister, Mr. Hukum Singh. Thirty-nine out of 44 Janata Dal-S MLA's [members of legislative assembly] and four independents were present at the meeting. [passage omitted] Congress-I and BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] have criticized Mr. Chautala's return as the chief minister of Haryana.

Congress-I Urges Dismissal*BK2303160191 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Text] Twenty-five new ministers have joined the Chautala ministry in Haryana. Eleven of them are of cabinet rank and 14 are ministers of state. The strength of the new Haryana ministry has gone up to 26. The state governor, Mr. Dhanik Lal Mandal, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new ministers in Chandigarh today. The former chief minister, Mr. Hukum Singh, has been designated deputy chief minister.

The Congress-I has urged the president, Mr. Venkataraman, to dismiss the Chautala government in Haryana. Briefing newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. M.J. Akbar, said Mr. Chautala had no moral right to hold any elective office while the Mahem inquiry involving him is still pending. He charged that the successive governments at the center during the last 14 months have sabotaged the Mahem inquiry.

The Haryana Pradesh [state] Congress-I president, Mr. Birendra Singh, has demanded imposition of president's rule in the state. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, he said large-scale rigging and violence is feared in the coming elections under the Chautala government.

Shekhar Rules Out Alliance With Congress-I*BK2403094291 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 24 Mar 91*

[Text] Mr. Chandra Shekhar has reiterated that the Janata Dal-S will have no electoral truck with the Congress-I. Speaking to newsmen at Manohargaon near Katni in Madhya Pradesh, he said he did not discuss the matter with the UP [Uttar Pradesh] chief minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, when he met him in Lucknow yesterday. He also denied reports that Mr. Yadav has developed differences with him on the issue.

In reply to a question on Mr. Om Prakash Chautala's reinduction as Haryana chief minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said the state legislators have exercised their constitutional right, and there is nothing to complain about.

Shekhar Favors Kashmir, Punjab, Assam Elections*BK2403161491 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 24 Mar 91*

[Text] Even 10 days after the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, the election scene remains hazy with major political parties yet to give a shape to electoral alliances at the national and state levels.

Mr. Chandra Shekhar has reiterated that the Janata Dal-S will have no electoral truck with the Congress-I. Speaking to newsmen at Manohargaon near Katni in Madhya Pradesh, he said the matter was not discussed with the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Mulayam

Singh Yadav, during their meeting in Lucknow. Mr. Chandra Shekhar denied reports that there are differences between him and Mr. Yadav on the issue.

Talking to newsmen at Dabolim airport in Goa this evening, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said he is in contact with the state governments in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and Assam and will make all possible efforts to hold elections in these states. He said there are certain elements who do not want peace and elections in Punjab. These elements who want to keep the atmosphere of uncertainty are creating trouble.

Uttar Pradesh Chief, BJP on State Elections*BK2403131491 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 24 Mar 91*

[Text] The Uttar Pradesh [UP] chief minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, has ruled out the possibility of holding state assembly elections along with the ensuing Lok Sabha poll. Talking to newsmen in Lucknow today, he asserted that there will be no split in the Janata Dal-S. He said that the high-level committee recently constituted by the party will decide the question of poll alliances with other parties at the national level.

In reply to a question, he denied that there are any differences between him and the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has demanded imposition of president's rule and assembly polls in UP and Gujarat. The party general secretary, Mr. J.P. Mathur, told newsmen in New Delhi today that this is the only way to end the political uncertainty in the two states. He also reiterated the BJP demand for similar action in Haryana. Mr. Mathur ruled out the BJP entering into poll alliances at the national level.

Janata Party Leader Favors Congress-I Alliance*BK2303161991 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91*

[Text] The Janata Party leader, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, says he favors an alliance between his party and the Congress-I for the coming Lok Sabha polls. Talking to newsmen in Cochin, Dr. Swamy, however, said if the proposed merger between his party and the Janata Dal-S materializes, he would go by the majority decision with regard to such an alliance.

Meanwhile, a former senior vice president of the Haryana Congress-I, Mr. Baniram Godora, and three former ministers resigned from the party in protest against the expulsion of Mr. Bansilal. Two former deputy speakers, Mr. Ved Pal and Mr. Phool Singh, also resigned from the Congress-I and joined the Haryana Vikas Manch.

Gujarat Chief, Congress-I in Poll 'Understanding'

BK2303162991 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] A PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] report says the Gujarat chief minister, Mr. Chimanbhai Patel, today held talks with the Congress-I leaders in New Delhi on an election understanding. In an informal chat with newsmen later, Mr. Patel said he would not take any decision on his future course of action without consulting the Congress-I, which supports his government. He also expressed the hope that Congress-I support to his government will continue.

Official Indicates Elections Likely 16-25 May

BK2303033891 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The chief election commissioner, Mr. T.N. Seshan, has said that the entire process from polling to counting for the coming mid-term elections to the Lok Sabha and some state assemblies will be completed within a week. Addressing a press conference in Madras, he indicated that the elections will be held between the 16th and the 25th of May. Mr. Seshan said polling will not exceed three days.

He said about 600,000 polling booths will be set up all over the country to enable little over 521 million voters to exercise their franchise. Replying to a question, the chief election commissioner said that the rough estimate of expenditure for the poll will be around 150 crore rupees, 40 crores more than the previous elections. Mr. Seshan said 42 days are required for going through the entire election process.

Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle's Rocket Tested

BK2403044291 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The Indian space research organization reached another milestone in the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle [PSLV] program yesterday. It successfully completed the ground testing of the powerful booster rocket motor and its control system at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. This is the second test of the booster solid rocket motor. It has established the design and performance of the rocket motor and its components. The 2.8 meter diameter rocket motor is currently the third largest of its kind in the world. It has been designed by Vikram Tara Bhai Space Center at Trivandrum.

Iran

Imam Meshkini Comments on Situation in Iraq

LD2203215491 Tehran IRIB Television Network
in Persian 1617 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Friday sermons by Imam Ayatollah 'Ali Meshkini, in Qom on 22 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] It may be appropriate for me to say what the situation has been in Iraq. I will give a list and an overview. Listen gentlemen. This is what happened recently: The arrest of Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i and several others, which is one of the greatest crimes.

The Iraqi authorities have kidnapped the eminent man from al-Kufah, from al-Najaf. They put him on a helicopter with some others and took him to Baghdad. This also happened in Iran at one time. The Iranian authorities came and took our great leader [Khomeyni].

Clashes around the town of al-Najaf are now very severe and are continuing. There is a need for your prayers. I will tell you about the general situation in Iraq. There are continuing clashes, killings, beatings, and arrests until your prayers go to their aid. Most of northern Iraq is in the hands of the Iraqi people, however. The Kurds are in control.

To the south of al-Basrah and the town of al-Nasiriyah, severe clashes are continuing. The Iraqi Army, the vicious Iraqi Government, has ordered some towns to be evacuated, and it seems as if Saddam Husayn wants to inflict on them the same fate that he inflicted on the town of Halabjah several years ago. We pray to God, with his mercy and grace, to inflict on this cruel man the same fate as he inflicted on Pahlavi [the Shah].

God be praised, our mojahedin—when we say our Iraqi mojahedin, our brother Muslim and Shiite nation, all brothers are as one—the mojahedin are engaged in military operations inside Iraq and they have decided, God willing, to achieve their goal in any way possible.

In the south, military operations are very severe. In Baghdad, a state of emergency has been declared, and there is martial law. The task is very difficult. The entry points into Baghdad have been closed and the city is under control. Government offices are all shut and the people go about everywhere with difficulty.

There are also multinational forces around al-Basrah and in that area. When one hears this one phrase, however—two or three phrases have been very upsetting for me: One, he has ordered them to hit and kill any clergymen they see in Iraq, anywhere in Iraq. Two, he has ordered them to kill any person who turns out to be Iranian in origin. That is the second phrase. The other phrase he has said with regard to al-Najaf is: Violate al-Najaf! In the same way, the cursed Yazid ordered his army to pillage Medina for three days after capturing it. He said for three days Medina is yours. You can commit any crime for three days. Medina was turned over to Yazid's army for three days. They did all that was shameful in history. Saddam Husayn has ordered them to do the same in al-Najaf if they are victorious. That is the sort of thing that is happening.

Oh God, be compassionate to the followers of Muhammad and his kin, to the oppressed of Iraq. Oh God, bring down this criminal soon; this cruel dictator

who will not forgo any crime in the pursuit of his desires and who has surpassed Tamerlain and Genghis Khan in history. Oh God, save our brothers in Iraq and bestow victory upon them. Oh God, strengthen the hearts of their youth, their men, their women; give them courage and endurance. Oh God, let us see a divine Islamic Government established in Iraq soon and let all Muslims be pleased at the destruction of Saddam and his followers. In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] [crowd chants in support]

As to the fact that our eminent leader Khamene'i has issued a statement about the situation in Iraq and has supported and praised Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i—we are most grateful for that. That eminent man, Ayatollah al-Khu'i is truly a defenseless victim now. His age does not permit him to do anything. He is over 90 years old. Taking such a person, kidnapping him, is a very great crime. I believe that God has made Saddam and his followers blind and deaf to the world in order for them to do what they have done and bring disgrace upon themselves. What has happened is not to their advantage, and it is hoped that it will soon turn to their disadvantage.

We also thank Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani, who at sensitive times does what he thinks is incumbent on him and does so gracefully; we thank him for his support. All this amounts to saying that clergy must help each other, God willing.

I want to make one other point at the end of my remarks. It is something which disturbed me very much today. God willing, it will turn out well. The United States has come and claimed a place for itself on the fringe of this region. It seems to be rather liking its place, and it does not want to move or go away. The reason is very clear, and it would not be good for us not to know it.

Do you know how many countries there are in the world today? Sometimes they put it at 270, 280; maybe 200, more or less. Of these countries, a total of 60 have oil and oil income. Of those 60, 30 countries export oil. Of all those 30 countries that export oil—they have carefully studied this—in about 14 or 15 years time, the oil and the oil wells will subside. The oil will be finished and, God willing, people will be rid of this oil—although the people's lives depend on oil now. It will be finished except in five countries. We will have five countries which will still have oil, and all of them are around here. It belongs to the Muslims. God has given his blessing and these reserves to Muslims. Saudi Arabian oil, Iranian oil, Kuwaiti oil, Iraqi oil, United Arab Emirates oil: these five countries have a strong oil base, and they will continue to have oil. Otherwise, in a few years time all the oil... [sentence incomplete as heard].

The world-devouring, criminal United States, the United States that you would not be wrong to blame wherever there is corruption in the world—wherever there is war, wherever there is an evil, if you pay close attention, you will find the hands of U.S. criminality involved. The United States was there, in Saudi Arabia,

so that perhaps when the oil runs out in a few years time it can find a spot there. But let them know that the United States will not remain among Islamic countries, at the heart of Islamic countries, God willing. It must go, God willing. [crowd chants in support] [passage omitted]

Grand Ayatollah Araki Condemns Al-Khu'i 'Arrest'

*LD2203143891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 22 Mar 91*

[Excerpts] His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Araki has issued a statement condemning the Iraqi regime's crimes in desecrating the holy sites, calling on freedom-lovers in the world to prevent continuation of the Iraqi regime's crimes as soon as and in any way possible. This is the text of the statement:

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] O God! Today the Muslim nations are at the end of their rope under the crimes of the world arrogance and its corrupt and corrupting agents and they are subject to aggression and injustice every moment. The enemies of Islam show no mercy to our children or adults, the infirm or the old, the sick, or women and children, and have no regard for the theological centers.

Today, the holy sites which are respected by all Muslims and the 1,000-year-old holy seminary of honorable al-Najaf are violated and insulted by the Ba'thist criminals under orders from their masters—a seminary which, for more than 1,000 years, has strived to strengthen the tenets of Islam and the righteous school of the followers of purity and chastity—peace be upon them—and whose bountiful blessings have kept the religion of Islam alive.

Today, the exalted source of emulation, His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Haj Seyyed Abu-al-Qasem al-Khu'i, may his blessings continue, is insulted by Ba'thist agents and unfortunately the various international organizations, which profess themselves to be supporters of human rights and knowledge, have kept silent in the face of these horrific crimes.

Stressing the right of nations to conduct their own internal affairs, condemning the presence of the United States and its allies in the region, and the crimes and insults of their agents against the holy sites and the al-Najaf seminary and Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i, Araki added: We call on the freedom-lovers of the world to prevent the continuation of Saddam's supporters' crimes as soon as and in any way possible.

We offer our condolences to the 12th imam, may our souls be sacrificed for him, and the holy seminary and all the world's Muslims, and we ask the Almighty to cut short the acts of those criminals and prepare the ground for the victory and establishment of the righteous rule of the 12th imam, may our souls be sacrificed for him. [passage omitted]

[Signed] Mohammad 'Ali Araki, 5 Ramadan 1411 [corresponding to 22 March 1991]

Day of Mourning for Iraqi Dead Held in Qom

Golpayegani Calls for Gathering

LD2203220891 Tehran IRIB Television Network
in Persian 1700 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Following the removal of Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i and some of the 'ulema of honorable al-Najaf to Baghdad, His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani, in a statement, called this act an affront to the lofty position of the source of emulation, clergy, and seminaries. He stressed: I strongly condemn these inhuman events, especially the affront against the al-Najaf seminary. [passage omitted] As a protest against the Ba'athists' brutal acts and the desecration of shrines of the lord of the monotheists [Ali] the lord of martyrs [Hoseyn], and his exalted brother [Abbas], peace be upon them, and as a gesture of sympathy to the families of the Iraqi martyrs and Shiites, it is fitting that the Muslims of the world gather in mourning in mosques on Saturday, the 6th of the holy month of Ramadan [23 March] and in this month of blessing and beneficence, in all humility, beseech God Almighty to remove the infidels, imposed regimes, and the policies of foreign mercenaries, especially the barbarous Saddam.

Golpayegani Leads Ceremonies

LD2303183991 Tehran IRIB Television Network
in Persian 1700 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Following the statement by Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani calling for mourning ceremonies in mosques to mark the desecration of holy places, the killing of the Muslim Iraqi nation, and insults to the integrity of that country's clergy by the Ba'thist Iraqi regime, mourning ceremonies were held in most of the mosques in Qom today.

According to the Central News Unit, a memorial service was held on the occasion in the mosque of Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani and in his presence. The gathering was attended by many of the professors, scholars, students, and clergy from the Qom seminary, as well as officials, heads of organizations, and a large number of Qom residents. After self-flagellation and dirge-singing to honor those killed in Iraq and to mark the desecration of holy places and the sacred al-Najaf seminary, one of the clergymen spoke about the Ba'thist regime's crimes against the innocent Iraqi nation.

Marchers Protest Saddam's 'Insults'

LD2203220491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] In protest against the recent crimes of the Iraqi regime, the desecration of the holy sites by Ba'athist forces, the insult against the sacred status of the source of emulation [Ayatollah al-Khu'i] and the seminary of the honorable al-Najaf, and the arrest of the Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i, the non-Iranian seminarians, scholars, and clerics of the Qom seminary and Iraqi deportees and

Kuwaiti refugees staged a march this morning. The marchers, who walked along the route from Qom's grand mosque to the Qods prayer house, chanted slogans condemning the Iraqi regime's brutal acts. Gathering at the Qods prayer house, in Qom, the marchers approved a seven-point resolution by chanting: God is Great.

In the said resolution, while Iraq has been condemned for the mass slaughter of the innocent Iraqi people, the desecration of the holy sites, and insults against Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i, the marchers have called on the Iraqi Army to join the Muslim people of Iraq and called for liberation from Saddam's prison. Also in that resolution, the marchers called on international organizations to pressure Iraq to prevent the slaughter of the Muslim people of that country and prevent the use of chemical weapons and napalm. In the resolution, the exalted leader and the Islamic system's authorities are praised for their special attention to this issue.

Qom Seminarians Condemn Iraqi Atrocities

NC2303074691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The Qom Seminarians' Association issued a statement supporting the Iraqi people's uprising and condemning the Iraqi regime's atrocities. The statement protests recent Iraqi regime measures such as the killing of citizens staging the uprising. It also points out the desecration of the holy sites; and the violation of the sanctity of the seminary at holy al-Najaf, of the clerics, and of the sources of emulation, especially His Eminence, Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i.

The seminary and the Muslims of the world will never tolerate these acts of irreverence and will hold the Iraqi regime responsible for the consequences of these shameful actions.

Extraordinary Majles Session Views Iraqi Unrest

LD2503074591 Tehran IRNA in English 0640 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 25, IRNA—The presiding board of the Majles Sunday discussed the latest developments in Iraq in an extraordinary session chaired by speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Maehdi Karrubi, reported the Persian daily JUMHURI ISLAMI Monday.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Baqir Hakim, speaker of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) who also attended, gave a detailed report on the popular uprising in Iraq. He said the escalating Islamic and revolutionary movement of the Iraqi people aimed at achieving freedom and establishing a popular government and that it was a natural trend of the internal developments in Iraq.

He also condemned Iraq's suppressive measures and sacrilegious [as received] of the holy Shi'ite sites in

Karbala' and al-Najaf and the regime's desperate efforts to put Grand Ayatollah al-Khu'i and his relatives under pressure.

The presiding board of the Majles deplored the crimes committed by the Baghdad government against the Iraqi nation and voiced concern over the expansionist aims of the U.S. and the reactionary regimes of the region.

It also announced Iran's support for the uprising of the Iraqi Muslim nation and the necessity of preserving the country's independence and unity among Iraqi combatant groups.

Commentary Views Iraqi Regime 'Dissolution'

LD2303215891 Tehran in English to Europe
1930 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Concerning the clashes between the popular forces and the Ba'athist Army of Iraq which have continued in the past 24 hours in various parts of Iraq, tens of people on both sides have been killed or wounded. According to an inhabitant of the city of al-'Amarah who came as a refugee to Iran, that city is still under the control of the popular forces and the Iraqi soldiers who do not surrender themselves to the people are taken captive or killed. According to eyewitnesses, the cities of al-Basrah and al-Tannumah in Iraq, too, are scenes of clashes between both sides; and despite the use of napalm and phosphorus bombs by the Iraqi Army to suppress the popular uprising in the southern cities of Iraq, the people are still in control of those cities.

In the north, the Iraqi insurgents after liberating the city of Karkuk have formed resistance groups, and just now heavy combats are taking place with the Ba'athist invaders of this city. The security forces of Iraq, making use of helicopters, attacked the innocent people of this city and have killed and wounded tens of women and children who were the civilians of this city. Owing to the resistance shown by the people against the regime of Baghdad, the security forces of the regime have lost their morale and are easily taken captive by the popular forces in most of the front or have joined these forces. In this connection, according to the Iraqi refugees in Karkuk area, one [word indistinct] brigade of the Iraqi Army has been taken captive by the insurgents, and the commander of the battalion (Amwaj-e Khafifa) and the forces under his command have joined the people.

As the Iraqi Army is still under economic sanctions and is hard-pressed financially, and especially food-wise, according to the informed political observers the prolongation of the civil war in Iraq will weaken still more the regime governing Baghdad, the signs of which are evident even now. The increasing desertion of the Iraqi soldiers from their posts or their captivity by the popular forces have resulted in the shortage of military forces for confronting the people. To meet this difficulty, the Iraqi Interior Ministry, by means of a communique on Baghdad

radio, invited the young Iraqis to join the police force of the country. In this communique it was stated explicitly that there is an urgent need for reinforcing the police in various parts, and all young people are asked to join the security police.

Another problem with which the rulers of Iraq are faced just now is their inability in safeguarding the financial needs of the military, as well as providing various [word indistinct], in which connection Saddam Husayn, the president of Iraq, on Thursday sent a verbal message to Turgut Ozal, the president of Turkey, asking him to reopen the Iraqi pipeline which passes through Turkey and had been closed for the Persian Gulf war.

Despite these efforts, it does not seem that Iraq—despite aid given by some foreign powers—will be able to renew its strength to stand against the popular forces. In view of the wide opposition of the people against this regime, what is certain is that the rulers of Baghdad have lost all their credit with the people, and this would be sufficient reason for the dissolution of the political structure of that country.

Reports of Fighting in Baghdad, Other Cities

NC2403184191 Tehran International Service in Arabic
1730 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Iraqi refugees arriving in Iran today reported that confrontations are continuing in Baghdad between citizens and government troops stationed in various parts of the Iraqi capital. They learned that Republican Guard forces have used napalm, phosphoric bombs, and tear gas grenades against the citizens.

Arrivals from al-'Amarah, al-Nasiriyah, al-Basrah, and al-Tannumah reported that ferocious battles are continuing in these cities between the popular forces and government troops, who are using all types of weapons against them.

Yasin Khalaf, a citizen of al-'Amarah, said that although the Ba'athist forces used napalm and phosphoric bombs to suppress the citizens, al-'Amarah is still under the control of the popular forces. He added that what is threatening the citizens' lives in al-'Amarah is the severe shortage of foodstuffs and medicines, noting that this has caused the death of some children and old people.

Ahmad Hamzah, another Iraqi citizen from al-Nasiriyah, who sought refuge in Iran today, said that the city is currently under the control of the popular forces and that the opposition forces have the upper hand in other areas of Dhi Qar Governorate. He added that the Ba'athist and Republican Guard forces used heavy artillery, napalm, and helicopter gunships yesterday against Dhi Qar citizens, which resulted in the martyrdom and injury of many women and children.

According to incoming reports, clashes continue in al-Najaf, Karbala', al-Kufah, al-Sulaymaniyah, Karkuk,

Irbil, Mosul, and Tikrit. Numbers of Army and Republican Guard troops have surrendered to the popular forces in these cities.

An Iraqi soldier who sought refuge in Iran reported that more than 400 troops of the 76th Brigade of the 7th Corps' 15th Division joined the popular forces in southern Iraq in the past four days. 'Ali Salih, another Iraqi soldier from al-'Amarah who took refuge in the Islamic Republic last night, said that since the Persian Gulf war broke out, more than 30,000 Iraqi troops have deserted from their units.

First Lieutenant Karim Kazim al-Sa'idi from the Republican Guard's 14th Brigade, who sought refuge in Iran, said that since the outbreak of the Persian Gulf war approximately 4,000 Republican Guard troops have deserted from the Army, taking their weapons with them.

Kurdish Leader Urges Opposition To Return to Iraq

NC2203151691 Paris AFP in English 1505 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 22 (AFP)—The leader of a Kurdish rebel group on Friday called on officials of all Iraqi opposition movements to return to Iraq and form a provisional government.

In a statement to AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE here, Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, said that 95 percent of Iraqi Kurdistan had been liberated.

"The puppet administration of Kurdistan has resigned and all is calm and in order," he said, adding that there were thousands of Iraqi army prisoners of war.

Mr. Barzani had just returned from Irbil in northeastern Iraq where he has been "managing the operation on the ground for the past ten days," the statement said.

The statement came as Iraqi forces were engaging Kurdish and Shiite insurgents throughout Iraq and amid Kurdish opposition reports that Baghdad's forces had bombed the rebels with napalm and sulfuric acid.

Group Retaliates for Jalula, Khanaqin Attacks

NC2503123291 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
1200 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] At dawn the opposition Mujahedin-e Khalq fighters launched a large-scale offensive against Iranian forces along an approximately 150-km stretch of the Iraq-Iran border. The Mujahedin-e Khalq Paris office said in a statement issued today that their attack was to retaliate for an Iranian assault on the movement's positions north of Jalula and Khanaqin.

'Lesson' of War Shows Military Buildup Needed

NC2203153491 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL
in English 17 Mar 91 p 2

[Editorial: "A Military Lesson From the P.G. War"]

[Excerpt] The six-week war between the U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi forces conveyed a very important military message to the progressive Third World countries, particularly the Islamic Republic of Iran. That message is the significance and importance of missiles, either anti-aircraft or surface-to-surface ones. Thousands of allied forces' air strikes against Iraqi economic, communication, transportation and military facilities broke the back of the Iraqi war machine which resulted in Baghdad's defeat in the Persian Gulf.

During the war, the Iraqi air force despite its modern MiG, Mirage and Sukhoi fighter planes, was totally ineffective, but Iraqi surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missiles fared better.

In one such attack an Iraqi missile demolished a barracks housing more than 100 American soldiers, of whom 27 were killed, 98 wounded, and 40 unaccounted for. The Iraqis were relatively successful in hitting some Saudi oil installations with their surface-to-surface missiles. Meanwhile, the Americans and their missiles destroyed a large number of incoming Iraqi missiles: Patriots knocking down Scuds.

Since the advent of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Iran has been the target of imperialist aggressions on various occasions, including the aborted Tabas operation by the U.S. forces, the Iraqi-imposed war, and the U.S. Navy's attacks against the Iranian Navy and oil installations in the Persian Gulf. Thus, it is important for Tehran to take the necessary measures to build up its own mobile short-, medium- and long-range surface-to-surface as well as surface-to-air missiles.

The Iranian military planners must take this big lesson from the Persian Gulf war and urgently work on new missile projects in order to boost the defense capabilities of the country and minimize possible enemy air and missile strikes against Iran's vital economic centers as well as military forces. [passage omitted]

'Islamic Union' Free of U.S. Influence Advocated

NC2503063791 Tehran ABRAR in Persian
13 Mar 91 p 2

[Commentary entitled: "The Incidents Around Us"]

[Text] The various developments throughout the region have created a special situation for Iran.

America is trying to ensure the continuous and long-term flow to Washington of the booty it gained from the war with Iraq through the formation of a security pact that it has in mind.

At any rate, in the still-chaotic situation in Iraq and Kuwait, and at a time when some of the regional countries are worried about genuine and imaginary threats, a security plan that America wants may take form. Under these circumstances, we should take a look at regional countries, especially the Persian Gulf countries, and try to seize the initiative to establish a security system free of foreign intervention.

The Persian Gulf countries view Iran as the strongest and biggest country, since the Islamic Republic of Iran is capable of setting up a security system in the region.

If Persian Gulf countries can create a security system without foreign intervention, then this could turn into the starting point of the formation of a network in which other Middle Eastern countries such as Jordan, Syria, Yemen, and other Islamic countries could also be included.

Such a pact would form a large Islamic union and will prevent the materialization of American and Israeli plans in the region.

President Says Will Not Keep Iraqi Aircraft

*LD2303191491 Hamburg DPA in German 1705 GMT
23 Mar 91*

[Text] Hamburg (DPA)—The Iranian Government does not intend to keep the Iraqi aircraft which landed on Iranian territory during the Gulf war. In a conversation with the Hamburg-published news magazine DER SPIEGEL (Monday edition), Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: "These aircraft belong to the Iraqi people. Our demands to the government in Baghdad are another matter."

Hashemi-Rafsanjani emphasized that the value of the aircraft is disproportionate to Tehran's demands. Involved are 22 fighter aircraft and a number of civilian aircraft. When told that the U.S. mentioned 130 Iraqi aircraft had escaped to Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani replied that those claims are unfounded.

According to Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Tehran government intends to observe international rules on that issue. "We have always said that we will keep them here until the end of the war. The aircraft arrived without our permission. We refused to shoot them down because the crews requested emergency landings."

State Protests U.S. Intercept of Planes

*LD2503094191 Tehran IRNA in English 0901 GMT
25 Mar 91*

[Text] United Nations, Mar. 25, IRNA—Iran has lodged an official protest on America's "illegal naval and air operations against Iranian reconnaissance planes in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman."

Iran's protest letter has been delivered to the U.S. State Department through the Islamic Republic's interest section at the Algerian Embassy in Washington. A copy of the letter was also submitted to the UN secretary general by Iran's permanent envoy here Dr. Kamal Kharrazi.

According to the letter U.S. military warships and planes in the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea had breached the international regulations in eleven cases between August 8-22, 1990 by intercepting and warnings to Iran's reconnaissance planes and thus prevented their routine flights.

Voicing the Iranian Government's protest against these illegal measures of the U.S. Government, the letter has asked for explanations in this respect.

American Call For 'Moderate' Policy Scored

*NC2503085291 Tehran ABRAR in Persian
12 Mar 91 p 12*

[F. Asef commentary: "America's Call on Iran to Adopt a Moderate Policy"]

[Text] American ideologues, namely Kissinger, rule out American "domination" in its traditional form, over the world, particularly the Middle East, and believe that from now on relations in the world should be based on a "balance" of forces so that American interests will not be threatened.

In a calculated approach by the West, the "balance" of forces theory in strategic areas calls for "predictable behavior."

Within this context, Bush has called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to adopt a more moderate stand so that it can be accepted in the new regional pact, whose axis are Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council. This is a pact that places the life of the region at the disposal of America and its allies.

However, the various aspects of the word moderate should be basically and precisely defined so that the meaning behind Bush's invitation can be clarified. Also, the following questions should be answered: Basically, what impact does the fight against imperialism and its economic bases have on the foreign policies of revolutionary countries? Also, how effective will the economic, political, military, and security aspects of the regional pact be, within the framework of a new regional order which is in the process of completion, in blockading the Islamic revolution? And, in the opinion of the American theoreticians, what is the connection between "moderation" and participation in such regional pacts?

The answers to these questions will clarify the extent of "balance" that exists in the countries of the south and especially in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

Part of the answer to the above questions, from the American point of view, is that the countries in the south

and the strong anti-American slogans should be "tolerated" to the extent that these countries' domestic and foreign relations are based on the following axioms:

1. Such revolutionary countries should have an economic system of supply and demand;
2. The resources of these countries should be offered in the markets of industrial countries;
3. Strong economic relations between these countries and the capitalist countries of the world should be established.

The mechanism of the "moderation" plan is primarily based on the principle that no country should pose a major economic, military, and cultural threat to American interests; namely, to oil and to its regional base, Israel.

The basic principle of the "iron fist" policy in the Persian Gulf, which is being implemented by the American-led multinational forces, is aimed at destroying the pillars of the struggle against Israel, America, and the reactionary Arab shaykhs. Its "bittersweet" outcome is the call for "moderation" to the Islamic Republic of Iran—the base of the Islamic revolution.

Therefore, it should be noted that the domestic and foreign policy options that led the Great Satan—America—to impudently call for a moderate policy should be reviewed so that the red line that was drawn by Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, and which is continued by his successor His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, will continue in the fight against American imperialism, and will keep the Islamic Republic of Iran in a state of constant struggle against the values of world arrogance headed by American imperialism.

RESALAT on U.S. Objectives in Seeking Ties

*NC2303074991 Tehran RESALAT in Persian
11 Mar 91 p 1, 12*

[Akbar Nabavi editorial: "Bush's Remarks and Reality"]

[Text] 1. From time to time American officials express a desire for ties with Iran. Why do they do this and what do the White House echelons hope to gain by raising this issue? It would appear that their main objective is to weaken and ultimately destroy the popular base of the Islamic revolution among the Muslims and the oppressed peoples of the world. The reasons for this are clear:

A. The Islamic revolution and the United States are fundamentally incompatible. The satanic nature of the United States is so abhorrent to Muslims that even if this country expresses its wish to move closer to the Islamic Republic of Iran, this is interpreted as an effort to inflict a blow on the prestige of the revolutionary system.

B. The United States now has such a black record of savagery and brutality against the Iraqi people that it is

trying to mitigate the fury and hatred felt toward it by the Muslim community in various ways. Expressing a desire for relations with the center of Islam (the Islamic Republic of Iran) is obviously connected with this effort.

C. The Islamic Republic of Iran's preeminent position in the region means that no plan for peace and security can succeed without its participation.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a model for countries of the region, which have developed a loathing for monarchical and dictatorial regimes. The United States has realized that any saber rattling against the Islamic Republic of Iran does it no good, as such a course only incites popular opinion and heightens anti-American sentiment in the region. Therefore, it has decided to resort to the tactics of dissimulation and apparent peacemaking!

2. The United States well understands that the Islamic ummah in Iran is particularly sensitive about the guiding principles of the Islamic revolution and will react to any attempt to belittle or dishonor these principles.

Bush's recent remarks during his meeting with Arab journalists about Iran's having become more moderate, or less radical, is an attempt to create the inaccurate impression that the Islamic Revolution has moved toward moderation in its religious struggle against the "Arch Satan," a moderation which in his opinion could facilitate some sort of coexistence.

Such suggestions are not new, of course, and are even being promoted by most of the ignorant and self-centered factions [in Iran], but this is a dangerous move and any lack of vigilance could inflict a blow on the revolution.

3. The problems between the United States and the Islamic Revolution are of an intrinsic nature, not a superficial one, and therefore the fire of the Islamic Revolution's campaign against the United States cannot be doused. Neither can the U.S. enmity against the Islamic Revolution be allayed, and in fact this enmity continues to mount. The consecutive exhortations by the great leader of the Islamic Revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, on this subject, especially his momentous utterances of 2 March in which he said the U.S. President was the most hated figure in Islamic countries, confirm this.

We should have no doubt that in this continuing battle, one of the two (the Islamic Revolution and the United States) will have to relinquish its deep-rooted traits. We are confident that the Islamic Revolution will ultimately emerge victorious from this battle.

My final remarks are addressed to Mr. Bush: Blood is still flowing from the wounds you inflicted on Iraq. This has profoundly distressed the Muslims of Iran, the region, and the world and their hearts are brimming with hallowed fury and loathing.

Editorial Warns U.S. Against Remaining in Region

NC2303112591 Tehran JOMHUR-YE ESLAMI
in Persian 16 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "The United States—The Element of Tension in the Region"].

[Text] According to an IRNA report from Washington, the daily THE WASHINGTON TIMES wrote that Kuwait has permitted the United States to establish an air base on Bubiyan island. The newspaper added that this base will be able to accommodate 50,000 troops, their family members, and employees of the various affiliated services. The base reportedly will be jointly administered by the United States and Britain. This will be one of three U.S. bases planned for this region, the other two of which are planned for Oman and either Bahrain or Qatar.

The report on the establishment of a U.S.-British air base on Bubiyan is unofficial and to date neither Kuwaiti nor U.S. officials have made any clear statement on the subject. There is also a strong possibility that what THE WASHINGTON TIMES has reported is nothing more than a mere rumor. The Americans know that the Muslim nations are extraordinarily sensitive and opposed to the military presence of the United States and all other Western countries. The Muslim nations will never tolerate such an occurrence and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran will never remain silent in the face of such an event.

The establishment of a U.S.-British military base in the region raises a question about the regional security system being discussed by the Persian Gulf countries. If the United States and Britain take any steps to establish a base in the region it would mean Western domination over the regional security system, and an independent security system by the regional countries would become meaningless.

In this regard, two points merit attention and are of extreme importance:

The first point is that because of Bubiyan island's special situation, the presence of any kind of military base there will constitute a direct threat to the Islamic Republic of Iran, which will not tolerate such a state of affairs. Just as it warned Iraq against occupying all or part of Kuwait, including the Bubiyan island, Iran declares that it will never accept such a situation.

The second point is that if the Islamic Republic of Iran participates in the regional security system, the problems that may arise due to the establishment of U.S. military bases in the Persian Gulf will also concern Iran. Just as the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials have repeatedly declared, a regional security system without the participation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has the longest coastline in the Persian Gulf, will be entirely meaningless.

On the other hand, any imposed plan for the establishment of a security system in the region will be doomed to defeat. The military presence of the United States and Britain, whether in the form of military bases or any other form, is not conducive to an independent regional security system. For this reason, and because of the above, not only can the Islamic Republic of Iran not participate in such a system, but it considers it opposed to its interests. In such a situation, the Persian Gulf will never be a tranquil region. This is because the very presence of foreign military forces in the region will in itself be the greatest cause of tension in the region.

The peace and stability of the Persian Gulf region can only be ensured when first, foreign military forces are not present in the region in any form, and second, the Islamic Republic of Iran is actively involved in the regional security system, the attainment of which is in stark contrast with the establishment of British and American military bases in the region. The presence of U.S. and British military bases will themselves constitute an element of tension in the region, and they will not be permitted to take such a step.

Commentary Predicts 'Blows' Unless U.S. Withdraws

NC2403192391 Tehran International Service in Arabic
1730 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Political commentary]

[Text] General Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said yesterday that his troops will remain for a few more months in southern Iraq. This is not the first time since the defeat of the Iraqi regime in the war for oil that the Americans have publicly stated their hegemonic objectives, despite the fact that U.S. officials tried, when they first sent their military forces to the region to conceal their long-term political, military, and economic objectives in the Persian Gulf. However, after the expansion of the U.S. hegemonic policy in the region, Washington's objectives have become exposed. The announcement that U.S. troops will remain for a few more months on Iraqi territory falls within that context. Such a course clearly contravenes the UN Security Council resolutions, which were drafted by the United States itself.

Nowadays, the U.S. authorities are conceited as a result of their victories in the war for oil, a war that was an unequal contest. They have closed their eyes to the facts because—as the leader of the revolution, Ayatollah Sayyid Khamene'i, has said—U.S. military presence in this region is certainly not in the interest of the United States in the long run. The blows that the popular forces in the region will deal to the U.S. Army will remove the ecstasy of victory from their drunken heads. Undoubtedly, the U.S. experience in Lebanon in the 1980's will be a clear lesson to the U.S. Administration if it reviews the facts. The United States must choose between two things: It either withdraws its forces from this region quickly and leaves the establishment of security to the

regional states themselves, and permanent stability will be achieved for all states; or, the United States should prepare to face acts and moves opposed to the U.S. hegemony and tutelage in the region.

From their long historical experience, the Muslims of the region know that the U.S. military presence is aimed at plundering their natural resources, intervening in their affairs, and exerting pressure on them. They will certainly use every available means to deal a blow to U.S. interests in this region.

U.S. Plans To Settle Palestine Issue Viewed

NC2303160291 *Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian*
16 Mar 91 pp 2, 13

[Abolqasem Qasemzadeh commentary: "Charting the Course or Resolving the Palestinian Issue"]

[Excerpts] The "Palestinian issue" is one of the important axes of the U.S. plan in the third phase after the Persian Gulf war. James Baker held talks on the issue during his visits to Arab capitals in the Middle East, particularly in Cairo and Damascus, and also talked with officials of the Zionist regime.

The U.S. secretary of state's meeting with Palestinian personalities from the occupied areas which treated them as Palestinian representatives, while rejecting any meeting with the PLO representatives and 'Arafat, was a political maneuver on the part of the United States and Israel.

At the present juncture, what is being termed the Palestinian issue and its solution can be summarized as follows:

1. The United States considers the Palestinian issue an obstacle to its security plans in the region and envisages a solution merely to the extent that it would remove this obstacle. This is not the assessment of the Islamic world and Muslims. Their assessment is that the Palestinian issue is a conspicuous example of colonialist treachery and crimes of the West and Zionism throughout 40 years of struggle. [passage omitted]

By bringing the Palestinian issue to the fore, the United States is attempting to project itself as the flagbearer of solutions for the problems in the Middle East. And Riyadh, Cairo, Damascus, and Tel Aviv have become the axis for its visits aimed at removing this obstacle.

2. The Zionist regime, in the words of the political theoretician [preceding word in English] of the West, Henry Kissinger, seems to have gained, with the end of the war, what is its best opportunity and one which it should "cherish." It has therefore adopted the policy that there should be direct talks with the Palestinians and the Arab countries and that all kinds of meetings with 'Arafat and PLO representatives should be rejected. [passage omitted]

3. If 'Arafat and the PLO accept the sovereignty of the Israeli regime, the Palestinian issue can be resolved politically with the support by the Arab regimes which can steer it forward, but Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have cut off aid to these regimes because of their support for Saddam. [passage omitted]

The United States is aware of this state of affairs and so are Israel, Damascus, Cairo and the Saudis, and the future conference will be held merely so that the United States and its allies in the region can decide the fate of the Palestinians, instead of [permitting] a Palestinian solution at the hands of Palestinians.

4. The United States and Britain have their eyes set on resolving the Syrian-Israeli dispute, the first phase of which is direct talks between Syria and Israel, which should be in tandem with a simultaneous Lebanese-Syrian solution to the Lebanese crisis. All Syria hopes for is that it will result in its retrieving the Golan Heights from Israel.

There is also a Jordanian-Palestinian solution for deciding the fate of the Palestinians, as far as the West is concerned. If this ever reaches the stage of setting up a government it will only be for internal control and will still be under the control and supervision of Israel.

The most important deterrent for this new plot, however, is the position and presence of the Islamic movements within Lebanon and the intifadah in the occupied territories. Those who have resorted to assisting in the despicable plans of the United States to decide the destiny of Palestine and the Palestinians will, sooner or later, be confronted by the pure Islamic and revolutionary forces in Lebanon as well as other Arab countries. They will see the revolutionary Palestinians and Muslims thwarting their obsequious plans, formulated with U.S. collusion, in the occupied territories.

Those who do not participate in the U.S. plans to map the future destiny of Palestine by purchasing, in the political markets of Cairo and Damascus, the commodities being peddled by the United States for the future of Palestine or for the U.S. security system will be subjected to political isolation and military attacks by the Zionists. [passage omitted]

Kuwait's Democratic Aspirations Questioned

NC2203163591 *Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL*
in English 12 Mar 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Absentee Amir, Absence of Rights"]

[Text] It has been almost two weeks since the allies' "liberation" of Kuwait, and Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah has yet to return to his emirate. To date, he is holed up in a mountain resort that has been converted into a luxurious exile in al-Ta'if, Saudi Arabia.

The amir is apparently unwilling to return to his country until his safety and personal comfort can be guaranteed—a reluctance that rankles his American “benefactors.” They opine that soldiers from several foreign countries risked their lives for his head, and of course for other considerations as well. Why is it that Jabir al-Sabah is more concerned about his comfort than looking after the welfare of his harassed people?

With the exception of tens of thousands of Kuwaitis who ran away during the Iraqi occupation, the majority of the population stayed and went through the horrors of midnight knocks on the door, arbitrary executions, and the bombings during the war.

Jabir al-Sabah's attitude only serves to magnify his not being fit to be a leader of his country. He and his family have always been known for their excessive lifestyles, their despotism and debauchery. They shamelessly flaunted their wealth, which rightfully belongs to the Arab masses, and served as a hard-to-turn-down invitation for another greedy tyrant to invade and lay his hands on such conspicuous assets. The discrepancy between the shaykhdom's wealth and those of the other countries in the region couldn't be ignored, and fueled resentments among the deprived and less privileged Arabs.

The Americans now say that Kuwait's “independence” has been “restored,” and its rightful ruler installed. Yes, indeed! What is this independence which the people now supposedly enjoy, and who is the rightful ruler when they live under the autocratic rule of the al-Sabahs? Kuwaitis, like all the other people in the Persian Gulf shaykhdoms, never did enjoy popularly elected governments; neither have they had politically free and open societies. Their rulers only kept track of their own security and the preservation of Western interests. If ever there were any indications of democracy in the tiny emirate, these all came to naught when the Constitution was rescinded and the parliament dissolved by al-Sabah in 1986.

With America's currently stronger influence in the emirate's affairs, Kuwait has merely passed from one occupier to another. The Amir has pledged to bring about political change in his homeland and make it more “democratic,” not because he is paying heed to the desires and aspirations of his people, but because he is being ordered to do so by his “liberators.” How can one believe the sincerity of the promise for democracy when a hit list was supposedly drawn up of the country's political opposition and assassins have been hired to kill them? One prominent Kuwaiti opposition leader, Hamid Yoan, [as published] was wounded and paralyzed last week by a gunman, and ‘Abd-al-‘Aziz Sultan, the chairman of Kuwait's second-largest bank, disclosed that the al-Sabah have assembled a private militia of about 3,000.

Inflexible leaderships have always failed to learn the lessons of the past. East Europe's fall has already marked the beginning of the end of autocratic regimes.

Kuwait is no longer the wealthy and prosperous state that it was in the past. It has to be rebuilt from scratch. If its citizens have been temporarily lulled by material comforts in the past, the awareness of their present plight, rightfully blamed on their irresponsible leaders, will serve as the tinder to inflame the desire to shape their own destiny.

Future Soviet Role in Mideast Region Examined

*NC2503064391 Tehran ABRAR in Persian
14 Mar 91 pp 1,2*

[Editorial: “The Soviet Union Expecting Final Defeat”]

[Text] The new phase of political developments in the Middle East has begun with Iraq's defeat.

In this scenario, new actors will be introduced, but there are reasons to believe that the traditional strongmen will not only not gain more power, but will also relinquish the power they have.

The world is hastily preparing itself to welcome the next century. Hotbeds should be removed, and one of these dangerous hotbeds is the longstanding Arab-Israeli conflict.

The PLO is currently living through the most sensitive moments of its life (since its emergence), and this is only because of ‘Arafat's stand toward the anti-Saddam Arab conservatives. Throughout the crisis, the occupying regime [Israel] received economic and military assistance, and with the removal of its strong rival Iraq by the hands of its godfather, it was thus able to achieve overnight what it could not have achieved in a hundred years. The occupying regime is not prepared for peace, and if this regime can, it will turn the Middle East peace conference into a regional conference under U.S. and Soviet supervision.

In his recent remarks on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti said that if a logical solution is not achieved through an international peace conference, war between the two sides will be inevitable within the next six months.

But the Soviet Union is still hoping for a game of rivalry. Moscow, which played a passive role throughout the entire Persian Gulf crisis, is still fantasizing, and it should not forget the following:

- Iraq has been removed from the power scene;
- Syria has placed itself in the Camp David camp together with the other Arabs; and
- Libya has nothing to say.

Thus, the Soviet Union is being invited to a regional conference in which its only role will be the signing of a final communique. By having the Soviet Union participate in such a conference, America intends to turn the remaining world public opinion in the West and in Europe toward its favor.

If Moscow accepts such a conference, the Soviet Union will have no hopes for its political future, even in a united Europe, and this is because:

- Europe wants to play a larger role in all the world's future developments; and
- the Soviet Union is not a spokesman for a united Europe.

This is exactly what America wants—that is, turning the Soviet Union's vote inside Europe into an abstention.

And if the Soviet Union gives in to this, then it will be facing serious problems both at home and abroad.

Thus, if the Soviet Union intends to play an active role in the political future of the Middle East, it should not put the helm of its foreign policy into America's hands, thus enabling it to regain its past prestige on the international scene.

Italian Official Presents Security Plan

LD2003144491 Tehran IRNA in English 1328 GMT
20 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar 20 IRAN—Deputy Foreign Minister of Italy Claudio Lenoci has told his Iranian counterpart for Euro-American affairs Mahmud Va'ezzi that Iran's "strategic status" at the Persian Gulf cannot be overlooked.

In his talks here last night, Lenoci said the Persian Gulf states and especially the Islamic Republic of Iran should "directly and effectively" cooperate for the stability and security of the Persian Gulf region.

He said Italy would continue efforts for creating and maintaining a good atmosphere for working between Iran and member states of the European Economic Community (EEC).

Va'ezzi and Lenoci also reviewed Italy's peace plan named "Security Conference and Middle East-Mediterranean Cooperation."

The two also agreed that the further killing of innocent people in Iraq should be stopped, and the Iraqis should enjoy their right for self-determination.

Bahraini Charge Delivers Message to Velayati

LD2503112291 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Yaqub Yusuf 'Abdallah, Bahrain's charge d'affaires in Tehran, at the end of his mission in Tehran, had a meeting with Mr. Velayati, the foreign minister, at which he handed him a message of gratitude from Bahrain's foreign minister to Islamic Republic of Iran officials. Bahrain's charge d'affaires also described the term of his mission in Tehran as significant and expressed his satisfaction at the expansion of relations between the two countries.

According to a Central News Unit report, Mr. Velayati, for his turn, having expressed his thanks for his Bahraini counterpart's message, stressed the need to continue the expanding trend of bilateral relations and expressed his satisfaction at the growing relations between the two countries.

Meteorological Group Leader on Environmental Damage

LD2303173991 Tehran IRIB Television Network
in Persian 1600 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The chairman of the Iranian Meteorological Organization, in an interview on World Meteorology Day today, said that the Persian Gulf war did irreversible harm to the environment and to Persian Gulf marine life. He added that the extent of the damage is so extraordinary that the Persian Gulf may be turned into a dead sea. He also emphasized that the situation would further deteriorate if prompt measures are not taken by international organizations. In a related development, while up to 600 Kuwaiti oil wells are still burning, the officials of that country announced that experts had to set ablaze several others to prevent the leakage of poisonous gases. The Kuwaiti oil minister declared that the burning of these gases was the only way of controlling the situation.

Black Rain, Smoke Darkens Cities

LD2403202391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Smoke caused by the burning Kuwaiti oil wells today half-darkened the city of Ahvaz. According to the Islamic Republic News Agency, the smoke, which had lost its density within the past few days due to cloudy weather and black rainfall in Ahvaz, once again covered the sky over Ahvaz this morning and darkened the city.

The same report indicates that between this morning and 1700 today, the density of the smoke caused by burning oil products has increased. In some parts of Ahvaz city the stench of burning oil products could be felt.

Also this morning and this afternoon, black rainfall on the cities of Khorramabad and Kudasht and in the district of Pol-e Dokhtar darkened the skies over those regions.

According to the IRNA report, the density of smoke as well as black rainfall today completely darkened the sky over Kuhdasht for 40 minutes and street lamps were turned on. In Pol-e Dokhtar too, since 0800 this morning, black rainfall darkened the sky over that district.

The effects of black rainfall could be seen in the streets of Khorramabad this evening.

Floods Strike Sistan Area, Losses Detailed**Red Crescent Sends Workers**

LD2303220391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
2030 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Following the rise in the water level of Hirmand River and flooding in large areas of Sistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Red Crescent announced: The organization's relief workers were sent to the flood-stricken region of Zabol from the towns of Zahedan, Yazd, Kerman, Mashhad, Semnan, Sari, and Kashan, and the workers have begun relief operations and the evacuation of villages. According to the Central News Unit, relief material sent so far by the Red Crescent, in two C-130 aircraft, includes 1,000 fully equipped emergency tents, 2,000 lanterns, 2,000 gas canister cookers, and 4,000 blankets. In this regard, Zabol's governor and head of the flood headquarters spoke to IRNA on Saturday night about the latest situation of Hiramnd river and the consequences of it breaking its banks and said: As a result of the Hirmand River's bank collapsing at two points, 90 percent of the water entering that river, with a volume of 1,300 cubic meters per second, is advancing in a vast area of land and residential regions. He added: As a result of advancing floodwater, 30 villages have been completely destroyed and 45 other villages are flooded and are being destroyed. If the process continues, and the flood extends further, a total of over 90 villages will be surrounded by floodwater. The head of Zabol's flood headquarters said the flood victims urgently need tents, food, fuel, and boats, adding: As a result of flooding over the past 45 days in Sistan, 10,000 houses have been destroyed, over 100,000 people have been made homeless, thousands of hectares of farmland have been damaged, and billions of rials of damage has been caused.

Evacuation Operations in Progress

NC2403072091 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Telephone report by an unidentified correspondent in Zabol; recorded]

[Text] The floods in the Sistan area are continuing and to date more than 65 villages have been destroyed or surrounded by water. According to reports, the volume of water flowing into the Sistan River was about 1,700 cubic meters per second until this morning. This morning a dam on the Sistan Dam-(Nohrab) bridge axis broke and now the water is flowing extremely rapidly toward the villages in the (Shirab) area in Zabol. To date more than 2,500 villagers have lost their homes, thousands of hectares of farmland have been destroyed, and more than 30,000 cattle are surrounded by water.

The same report adds that all of Zabol's efforts have been put to use in saving the flood-stricken people and the cattle, and that efforts to evacuate the victims by two gendarmerie helicopters and 15 motorboats continue.

The main road linking Zabol to Zahedan and the Zabol-Shiraz road, as well as all the roads to the flood-stricken areas are still blocked and the efforts of the Sistan va Baluchestan province transportation officials to re-open the roads are continuing.

More Sistan Villages at Risk

NC2503052791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The floods in Sistan are continuing and more villages are at risk. The Central News Unit correspondent in Zabol reports that the Zabol flood headquarters has announced that the only access to the villages is by boat or helicopter and that more of these are needed. The volume of water flowing into Sistan River continues to be 1,000 cubic meters per second.

The floods in Salmas, which started on Saturday, began to subside markedly yesterday afternoon. The West Azerbaijan governor general said in an interview that the flood, which threatened the villages of Qareh Qeshlaq, Yowshanlu, and Kangarlu, fortunately did not result in casualties or destruction of homes. He said that the swelling of the Zowla River destroyed about 1,000 hectares of the land in these three villages and damaged 1,500 hectares more. The West Azerbaijan governor general pointed out that the swelling of the Zowla River started to subside yesterday afternoon.

Pakistan**Prime Minister's Message on National Day**

BK2303051191 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The nation celebrates Pakistan Day today with the traditional fervor and the spirit of an independent nation. In their messages on the occasion, the president and the prime minister have called upon the nation to pledge itself to build Pakistan into the country that was originally envisioned. They have asked the nation to resolve that Islam, democracy, and industrial revolution will be their predominant objective in the coming years. [passage omitted]

In his message on the occasion, the prime minister asked the countrymen to announce their programs in clear terms reflecting the spirit of this day. He said that those who consider themselves as heir to the spirit of the Pakistani Movement can only express satisfaction that last year through a democratic process this government had come to power which has full faith in the 23 March resolution. But the achievements of 44 years since independence are not enough to lure us into satisfaction. Today, when an elected government is in power, it is our collective responsibility to enliven the true spirit, realize the dreams, and fulfill the pledges that are related to this day.

Nawaz Sharif said Mohammad Ali Jinnah had explicitly declared that Pakistan would provide a base for practice in Islam where there will be no other system but democracy and that we have to strengthen the industrial base of Pakistan. The prime minister said that if we enforce Islamic laws in our country, strengthen the democratic process, and lead the people to prosperity through an industrial revolution, it will ensure a strong and prosperous Pakistan.

President's Speech to Parade Units

BK2503113091 Lahore *THE NATION* in English
25 Mar 91 pp 1, 12

[Text] Islamabad—President Ghulam Ishaq Khan said on Saturday [23 March] that the government "is in capable hands" and enjoying firm and solid support of the masses, had initiated befitting measures for safeguarding geographical as well as ideological frontiers.

"Viable measures have also been initiated for pursuing a self-reliant economy, which will soon reap fruits," he said.

Addressing the spectacular Pakistan Day joint services parade, marking the 51st anniversary of the adoption of the "Pakistan Resolution of 1940", he said efforts were under way to enforce Islamic social justice, achieve enviable integrity and promote industrial growth and achieve prosperity.

The President paid rich tributes to the valiant freedom fighters, but regretted that despite passage of 51 years, we were still trying to give a practical shape to the ideals, set for a free and sovereign Pakistan, "which, we fortunately are".

Describing the inner meaning behind the word "freedom", he said, it did not only mean getting a physical possession of a homeland. "It actually means, unshackling of the alien political thinking and deciding our matters through our own set of policies and line-of-action," he added.

He said under the able leadership of Quaid-i-Azam, Pakistan got independence within seven years of the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution in 1940. "It showed upright sense of commitment on the part of our sagacious capable and great leader," he added.

President Ghulam Ishaq said the Gulf war proved that the real defence capability of a nation was its political and indigenous technological development and not "borrowed capability". He said a spirit of patriotism, and devotion to duty was needed to acquire the defence capability was being further strengthened. [sentence as published] Any weakness in defence capability invited aggression. He said Pakistan did not harbour any aggressive intentions and wanted to live in peace within its geographical frontiers. He said Pakistan stood for peaceful co-existence, independence, sovereignty of the states and respect for the internationally accepted principles.

The President said whether it was Panama, Grenada or Kuwait, Kashmir or Afghanistan, Pakistan took a principled and consistent stand as it believed in respecting the independence and sovereignty of the nations. He said people in Kashmir were being subjected to atrocities and were being denied their right to self-determination under the UN Security Council's resolutions.

He said the valiant Afghans after forcing the withdrawal of occupying forces, were now engaged in Jihad against their remnants to form their own representative government. Similarly, he said, Palestinians were deprived of their freedom.

President Ghulam Ishaq said the government and people of Pakistan felt proud of their armed forces "who are blessed with an exemplary sense of patriotism, devotion to duty, enviable valour and discipline and high professionalism". He said Pakistan firmly believed in and adhered to peaceful co-existence, respect for freedom and sovereignty, peaceful resolution of issues and non-interference.

While protecting our geographical frontiers and extending support for principles, he said, we must also duly safeguard our ideological basis, so that we could uphold the proud identity we signify, while being at watch against any cultural aggression inflicted on our society.

"We are torch-bearers of the last message of Almighty Allah. Enforcement of this divine message in Pakistan is a sacred pledge we have made with our Creator. The government considers implementation of this pledge not only as privilege but as an obligation.

It is imperative on us to strive for creating a congenial and collective atmosphere in which enforcement of Islamic Order is done, as envisioned by the martyrs of the Pakistan Movement—for it remains to be an amanat (trust) on their part on our shoulders".

Praising the courageous steps taken by the government with regard to self-reliance, the President said, these would yield positive results, for the government saw self-reliance as vital for "a factual independence (haqqeq azadi)".

He said the government had adopted a realistic and courageous policy in respect of promotion of investments, encouragement of free economy and development of trade and industry. He said bold initiatives in this respect had been made which would bring favourable results.

"Still, more solid steps are on the anvil in this direction. Hence, our national capabilities and energies are being made use of properly, which have so far not been adequately harnessed," he said.

However, acquisition of self-reliance needed seriousness of conduct, besides entertaining good faith. Success of this endeavour also depended on the determination and sense of sacrifice of the nation. He had given enormous

sacrifices for seeking freedom and now we must offer some sacrifices for consolidating Pakistan, he said.

The President said no opportunity for consolidating Pakistan, as was present today, was found during the past. "By the grace of Almighty Allah, democratic order is at work presently. The government enjoys fullest confidence of the masses as well as support of an overwhelming majority of the elected public representatives. The various organs of the government enjoys a total conformity and an enviable cordiality exists among them. The leadership of the nation is in the hands of devoted, selfless and determined persons who are striving for promotion and acquisition of collective interests and gains, instead of pursuing personal or petty interests," he added.

"It is obligatory on the part of all those who want to see Pakistan rise to the first rank of civilised, developed and democratic nations, to maintain the present conducive atmosphere. If a self-seeker wants to sow seeds of dissension through statements or speeches, or by means of hatching conspiracies to pollute the ideal state of affairs, he is doing so vainly. The present atmosphere in the country is the result of the conscious democratic will and a constructive approach and conduct. Neither the collective wisdom of the people can be cheated nor can those entertaining positive thinking can be hoodwinked and misled".

Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan made a fervent call to the nation to rededicate itself to the unity, integrity and prosperity of the country, by emulating the zeal and vigour of the martyrs of the struggle for Pakistan. It was imperative to give a practical proof of redeeming the pledge by religiously adhering to the motto of "Faith, Unity and Discipline".

The President said the purpose of the joint services parade was to pay tributes to the valiants and martyrs of the nation, who performed the historic miracle of the creation of Pakistan. He congratulated the organisers, Parade Commander and the officers for arranging such a splendid parade.

The President said Pakistanis should learn from the history of their failures and successes like the living nations. He said the elimination of negative elements and prejudices should be given the status of Jihad. He said, in their presence national freedom was deprived of its real essence and would be merely reduced to ceremonial rituals. He emphasised the need to strengthen positive values and traditions which were the manifestation of liberty and were necessary for its protection. He said those in the forces of Pakistan should be supported as they stood for the renaissance and promotion of such values.

President Ishaq said it was not easy to guard the real freedom. He said, the task became more difficult for the smaller countries and the nations which possessed limited resources.

It was necessary, he said, to acquire invincible defence power to discourage the designs of regional dominance, aggression and expansionism.

Despite lack of resources, the President said, the government had adopted a policy to provide the best and the most modern equipment to the armed forces. He said the government would continue to place the defence needs in its national priorities alongside the economic and social development of the country.

President Ishaq said the government would endeavour to provide an indigenous high technological base for a strong defence.

Sri Lanka

President Renews Dialogue Offer to LTTE

BK2303081891 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English
0645 GMT 23 Mar 91

[“OANA/pool item"]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 23 (LANKAPUVATH)—President Ranasinghe Premadasa Friday [22 March] urged the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] to give up their faith in the bullet and allow the ballot to determine the future of the people in the war-torn northeast. "It is not too late for the LTTE to enter the democratic process", he added.

In an emotion charged address at the opening of the new pavilion and redeveloped Bogambara Stadium in Kandy, the president reminded the LTTE that they had agreed to pave the way for a free and fair poll in the north and east during the peace talks they held with the government for about an year.

"On the eve of the election to local government institutions in seven provinces of the country, it pains me a great deal to reflect on the plight of the innocent people in the north and east. If the LTTE gives up violence, the government is prepared to lose no time in holding fresh elections to the Northeast Provincial Council and to the local government institutions in that province", he emphasised. He asserted that the government never believed in military action to settle issues in the country.

"Should this unnecessary war causing so much misery and suffering be allowed to go on? Should the people in the north and east be denied the peace, the benefit of development and democratic rights that their counterparts elsewhere enjoy? Will it not be a blessing, if the money and other resources now being spent on the war are used for development?", the president asked.

During our peace talks with the LTTE leaders like Mahattya, Yogaratnam Yogi, Dr. Balasingham and others, they accepted the position that the negotiations aimed at resolving the ethnic tangle for good should be

the business of the government in power and the elected representatives of the Tamil-speaking people in the north and east, he said.

"We are only a militant group, not the elected representatives of our people, they [LTTE leaders] said and urged the government to dissolve the Northeast Provincial Council functioning at the time. There was no legal provision to dissolve it, but the government was later compelled to dissolve it when the EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front] adopted a resolution incorporating a unilateral declaration of independence for the north and east, the president recalled. "The LTTE once accepted the principle that the people in the north and east should be given a chance to elect their representatives with whom the government could then hold negotiations. The door is still open to the LTTE to enter the democratic process. Therefore, I call upon them to give up violence even at this stage and allow the holding of free, fair and peaceful elections in the north and east", he said.

Security Forces, LTTE Battles Continue

LTTE Deaths Set at 300-500

BK2303093691 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English
0826 GMT 23 Mar 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 23 (LANKAPUVATH)—As the dust settled this morning on the four-day battle between Sri Lanka's security forces and the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] at Silavattura and Kokkupadayan in the Mannar District, official sources told LANKAPUVATH the terrorists had suffered a crushing defeat and sustained the largest losses in a single battle since it began its campaign of brutal terror. Military estimates put the LTTE killed as between 300 to 500. Indications were that the number of terrorists dead were closer to 500.

Army Commander Major General Hamilton Wanasinghe told LANKAPUVATH that the bodies of 100 dead LTTE terrorists had already been found this morning, along with 30 weapons. The terrorists had taken many dead and wounded with them as they withdrew in the face of the overwhelming superiority of government troops. Twenty three soldiers were killed in the fighting and 56 wounded, five of them seriously. The LTTE poured in about 1000 terrorists, including many women cadres and reinforcements from Jaffna in a futile bid to overrun the two security forces camps at Silavatturai and Kokkupadayan situated on the north west coast, three kilometres distant from each other and 215 kilometres from Colombo. The fighting ended Friday afternoon after a successful air, sea and land counter-offensive by the security forces. The bodies of the dead terrorists were reported strewn all over the battlefield.

The curfew in the Mannar District and adjoining assistant government agents division of Villachiya and the

grama sevaka [village-level official] division of Punkulam continue, while a curfew was imposed today on the northern district of Mullaitivu. The curfew in the district of Kilinochchi has been lifted. Meanwhile, three LTTE terrorists were killed in an encounter with government [words indistinct] in Jaffna.

LTTE Captures Kokkupadayan

BK2403031491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0238 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Colombo, March 24 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's most powerful guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), said Sunday its fighters had captured a key Army camp in the curfew-bound northwest killing about 50 soldiers.

In a statement from its London office received here, the LTTE said its guerrilla commando units Friday stormed the Kokkupadayan Army Camp in Mannar District after three days of fierce fighting. It said that the rebels had also besieged the nearby Silavathurai Army Camp which "is expected to fall at any time. The LTTE special commando units comprising men and women cadres have captured the Kokkupadayan Army Camp," the statement said. "About 50 soldiers have been killed and several others have run into the jungles in order to reach Silavathurai," it said.

LTTE Successes Debunked

BK2403112091 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English
1020 GMT 24 Mar 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 24 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Government troops continuing mopping up operations after dealing the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] its biggest defeat in a single battle in the coastal towns of Silavattura and Kokkupadayan in the north-western Mannar District, reported having found the decomposed bodies of 115 men and women terrorists, 34 automatic weapons and a large stock of ammunition, rocket launches, rocket propelled "Arul" grenades, mortar bombs, and vehicles abandoned by the Tigers as they fled in the face of the overall superiority of Sri Lanka's security forces in a massive air, sea, and land offensive.

Security sources said about 100 more bodies of terrorists were lying at the scene of last week's battle and were being recovered by troops. The terrorists had also taken many of the dead along with them as they withdrew.

Security sources told LANKAPUVATH that both the Silavattura and Kokkupadayan Camps were never in danger of being overrun and were absolutely secure. Reinforcements had been moved into both camps since the LTTE launched its first attack on the two camps, sited three kilometres from each other, at 2130 hours (local time) last Tuesday [19 March] night. The battle ended Friday afternoon, with the security forces having

gained a signal victory. The Air Force and the Navy had taken on and dealt effectively with specific LTTE targets, while the Army had taken the ground battle to the terrorists and routed them.

Video which will be telecast tonight by the national television network, Rupavahini, has nailed the canard emanating from the LTTE disinformation centre in Paris, that the Kokkupadayan Camp has been overrun by the terrorists. The operational headquarters of the Ministry of Defence told LANKAPUVATH a special screening of the video is being held Monday for local and foreign journalists. The video gives a true picture of the situation in Silavattura, Kokkupadayan and knocks the LTTE claims into a cocked hat, security sources said.

From 300-500 terrorists were killed in the four day battle, while 23 soldiers died in the fighting and 56 were wounded. The curfews in the districts of Mannar and Mullaitivu continue, as mopping up operations continue. Meanwhile, four civilians were killed and 15 wounded when LTTE terrorists this morning exploded a bomb in a market at Akkaraipattu, in the eastern Amparai District.

LTTE Captures Thandikulam

BK2503063691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0405 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Colombo, March 25 (AFP)—The Tamil Tiger guerrillas said Monday they attacked and overran another army camp in strife-torn northern Sri Lanka after killing 11 soldiers. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said the camp in Thandikulam in Vavuniya District was overwhelmed Sunday following a "carefully planned surprise attack by a specially trained commando unit."

The statement issued from the LTTE's Paris office said the guerrillas suffered no losses during the attack. "Eleven Sri Lankan soldiers were killed while the remainder fled. Several weapons were captured," the

statement said. It did not say how many soldiers were in the camp at the time of the attack.

Government military officials were not immediately available for comment but they had denied an LTTE claim of capturing another Army camp at Kokkupadayan in northwest Mannar District over the weekend.

The LTTE mounted a simultaneous assault on Kukku-padayana and nearby Silavaathurai Army camps overnight last Tuesday and continued the attacks till Friday, according to official accounts of the fighting.

The military said it killed at least 300 LTTE guerrillas, including untrained teenagers and women, in beating off the attacks in Mannar District, using ground troops backed by air and sea. Army casualties have been put at 27 dead and more than 55 wounded.

The LTTE, which is fighting government troops to establish a separate state for the island's two million Tamil minority, has rejected government figures of guerrilla losses.

Ship Loaded With Undeclared Arms Detained

BK2303122691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1017 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Colombo, March 23 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan customs has detained a foreign ship that entered Colombo harbour with hundreds of crates of mortars, police sources said Saturday. Acting on a tip-off, a joint customs and police team raided the ship, which was travelling from Belgium to Taiwan when it called here for fuel, on Friday and found 2,050 crates containing 11,700 mortars, they said. The customs was conducting investigations, they added.

Local press reports said the ship was owned by a New Zealand firm and that five crew members had been taken into custody. The crew had merely informed port officials that the vessel was carrying cargo, the reports said.

All ships carrying military supplies are required to inform port authorities before entering the harbour in Colombo.